

How well does a suburban social centre  
Supplement the work of the schools?

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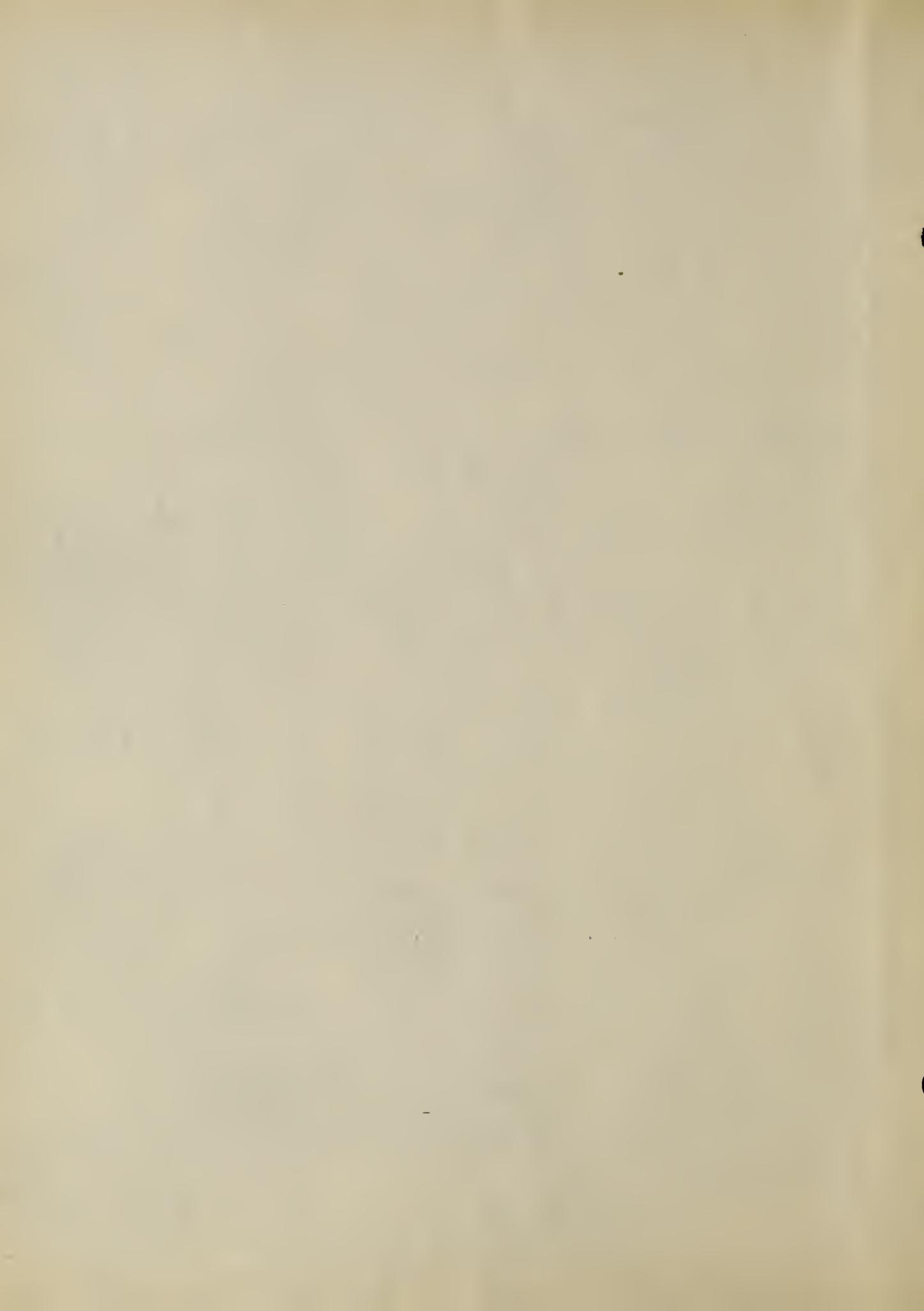
HOW WELL DOES A SUBURBAN SOCIAL CENTRE SUPPLEMENT  
THE WORK OF THE SCHOOL ?

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In partial fulfillment of requirements for the  
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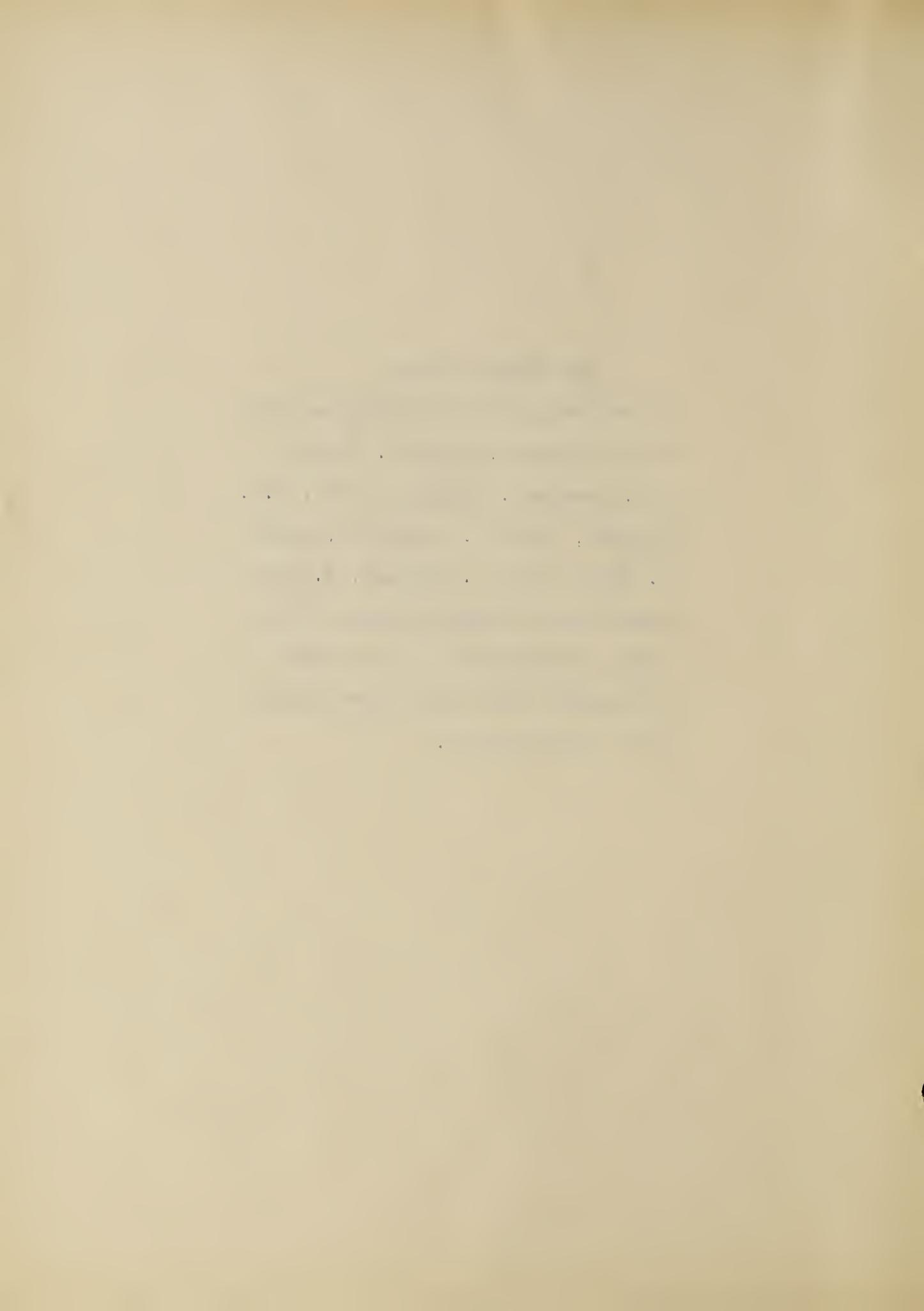


To  
my good friend, Kenelm Winslow,  
whose breadth of social outlook  
and whose wise, untiring and  
inspiring leadership have made  
possible much that has been done  
in that section of Newton, known  
as Nonantum, to make for better  
citizenship, I gratefully dedi-  
cate this thesis.

W.H.S.



The writer wishes  
to acknowledge his indebtedness to  
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way to this thesis.



Foreword to the Study of  
the Stearns School Centre of  
Nonantum at Newton, Mass.

The idea of this brief study of the work of the Stearns School Centre had its inception in a feeling that here, in this least known and inconspicuous part of the larger city of Newton, there were to be observed the social changes and developments which typify the growth of our country as a whole. The story, while not startling or spectacular, seemed to have elements of human interest of enough value to make it worthy of the telling.

Doubtless other communities in many parts of the country could be found with records of similar and even more interesting efforts toward a leavening of one of its parts with that of the larger whole. However there are grounds for believing that countless other places need this type of work developed within their midst. As our life grows more complex and complicated there must needs be more of the "sharing" on the part of those with more of the enriching things of life with those who have less of them.

This study also would seem to be timely in that two full decades is a long enough period upon which to base certain observable conclusions. The fact that a new generation of workers and supporters of the work will soon be replacing those who have been active during the years of the Centre's existence adds another reason for the recording of the story at this time.



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## Chapter I.

### NONANTUM - THE COMMUNITY AND ITS HISTORICAL BACKGROUND EDUCATIONAL - CIVIC - SOCIAL - RELIGIOUS

Nonantum - an Indian word meaning "place of rejoicing" - was the original name given to all of Newton. As was so graphically brought out in the story of the Tercentenary Pageant of Newton, presented in June 1930, legend has it that good Chief Waban, having come with members of his tribe from the neighboring settlement in Concord, Mass., made his dwelling place on Nonantum Hill. This was in the vicinity of the historical marker, known as the Eliot Memorial, which memorializes the historical preaching of the apostle John Eliot to Chief Waban and his tribe of peaceful Indians.

In much later days when Newton as a whole refused to make use of the early Indian title it came to be the name used to designate that smaller section of the city lying almost due north of the so-called Newton Corner. At the present time it includes a region that is bounded roughly on the east by the portion of Watertown found on the south side of the Charles River, on the south by the Waban Park section of Newton Corner, on the west by the Nevada and Hawthorne St. edges of Newtonville and on the north by the Charles River across from West Watertown.

Local history has it that it was once familiarly known as "Tin Horn Village"<sup>1</sup>, due to the fact that one of the early

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<sup>1</sup>•Rowe, History of Newton, p. 78



industrial concerns used a large tin horn instead of a whistle to call its workers within doors at the proper and necessary times. Even now certain smaller subdivisions are known by designations acquired by reason of some distinctive feature. That part immediately adjacent to the small body of water known as Silver Lake is referred to as the "Lake".

With the exception of one or two small manufacturing plants, this vicinity remained distinctly a rural section on up through the Civil War even to the closing days of the Nineteenth century. Fields open enough and of acreage sufficient to be called modest farms were numerous. In fact, that portion of the community lying near the Charles River might well have been of sufficient attractiveness to have substantiated the statement that in the early days of the Mass. Bay Colony the wealthy residents of Boston and Beacon Hill were wont to have summer homes within the settlement of Newton.

It was from such beginnings that the present day community of Nonantum had its development. The threads of the story of its sleepy founding and its leisurely growth are all so intermingled and tangled that it is no easy task to separate them and classify them. However for the sake of clarity an attempt will be made to relate the historical background for this brief study under the four headings as are found at the beginning of this chapter. At best the picture is only fragmentary. Only such high points will be touched as will serve to indicate the nature of the community in which this effort of social sharing has been carried on.



## Educational Elements

The first public school which we find record of as having served part of the Nonantum district in the modern history of our times was the Jackson School located on the north side of Watertown St. at the corner of Bridge St. This site was what is now the tiny park plot opposite the Fire Station # 8 at Bridge and Watertown Sts. The school was named after the well known Jackson family, so prominent in the founding of the city of Newton. The Jackson building had rooms for four grades and a kindergarten class. It was credited however to the village of Newtonville. In Prof. Rowe's Tercentenary History of Newton we find the record of an attendance of 307 in the year 1880, thus making it the third largest of all the city's grammar schools in point of attendance. ( 1, Rowe, History of Newton, p. 184 )

Eliot School, erected on Pearl St., near Watertown St., in 1883, was the first building located in Nonantum proper to be credited to the district as its very own school. In its earliest days it had classes for the 5th, 6th and 7th grades. Its graduates went on to the Horace Mann School in Newtonville. After the erection of the Stearns School, the Eliot building continued to be used as an auxiliary to the Stearns, having at one time provision for grades 1,2,3 and 6, the latter permitting the employment of a man teacher. At the present time it is a part of the Stearns School District with rooms for grades 1 to 4.

During the years from 1905 to 1907 there began the first agitation for a really modern grammar school to be located in the heart of the Nonantum district. This was largely an out-



growth of the interest which had been aroused in Civic matters by the Nonantum Improvement Association. As was natural, there were diverse opinions as to where such a school should be located. Some desired to have it on California St. near the Charles River, others wanted it on Pearl St. near the Eliot building, while a third group clamored for a site off Jackson Road, near the present site of the so-called Flanagan estate. In answer to the plea of this third group folks on either side of Watertown St., the main artery through the Village, contended that if the Jackson Road location was chosen the school would really be in Newton Corner rather than in Nonantum.

Finally a happy solution was found in the offer of members of the Stearns family to give part of the land needed and to sell, at a reasonable figure, the balance of the land required for a truly representative school for the Nonantum Village. This site was off of Watertown St. facing on Jasset St. The first real stir of civic pride gripped Nonantum when this matter was settled and the work of erection was begun in the spring of 1907. In a pamphlet called Stearnanto, published by the Ninth Grade of the Stearns School in 1910, we find some further details as to the selection of the site and the erection of the building.

" In other parts of the city modern schools had been erected and there was much need of one in our district. When it was reported that one hundred thousand dollars had been appropriated for the purpose of erecting a new school in Nonantum, the people were much pleased.

The Stearns lot was purchased, the old barn which stood upon it was torn down and the clubhouse moved to Crescent St.

The name of the building was to be the ' STEARNS ' in honor of an old family which has lived in this part of Newton for many years and from whom the lot was purchased.



In the spring of 1907 work was begun and the children watched eagerly the rapid growth of the new building during the summer. By the time school began in the fall most of the roof was on, so that the workmen were busy inside during the winter.

On our way home many were the coats that we boys have had on the scraps of iron sheeting that were thrown away by the workmen.

The boys and girls were interested in the new building and we went inside to inspect it so often that we were finally asked to keep out. What interested us most were the kindergarten, the shower baths and the master's office to which we hoped we would never have to go trembling with fear.

When the building was finished, the lawn graded, and the shrubs set out, it was a fine looking building. The people of the district were very pleased with the new school although many were disappointed that it did not have a frontage on Watertown St.

In the fall of 1908 the whole school opened and in the following June four pupils were graduated from the eighth grade. But the class of 1910 is to be the first ninth grade to have the honor of graduating from the Stearns. "

In the choice of a principal for the new building the School Committee was fortunate in the person of Mr. Kenelm Winslow, a sturdy son of Cape Cod, a native of the town of Brewster, Mass. A graduate of the Hyannis State Normal School in the Summer School class of 1905, Mr. Winslow came to the Newton School System in 1902 to have charge of the Hamilton School in Newton Lower Falls. Here he had shown organizing ability and his promotion to the Stearns District was the merited reward for work well done in his first charge at the Lower Falls.

The Stearns pamphlet gives the organization of the Stearns School District as follows:



FRANK E. SPAULDING

Superintendent of Schools

District School Committee

Fred H. Tucker

Abbot Bassett

Joseph N. Palmer

Teachers

KENELM WINSLOW

Principal

Ruth L. Piper, Grade VI

Principal's Assistant

	Gr.		Gr.
Abbie E. Munn	I	Anne L. Brackett	IV
Ella L. Howe	I	Hannah B. Hunt	V
Charlotte E. Stearns	II	Ruth L. Walton	VII
Beatrice E. Cervi	II, III	Maud M. Shippee	VIII, IX
Elizabeth J. Gleason	III	Alice E. Wheelock, Kindergartner	
		Kathrina Kimball, Assistant Kindergartner	
		Mary M. Fletcher, Substitute	
		Ethel T. Fleu, Special Assistant	



The exact figures as to enrollment during that first year are not available but from the kindergarten through the 8th grade there were about 400 pupils in the school. The 7th and 8th grades were combined within one room during the first few years. The kindergarten had about 30 children. As the enactment making it necessary to keep children in school up to 16 yrs. of age was not passed until 1905, the attendance in the upper grades was not as regular as it was in the lower grade classes.

The experiences of the first year in the Stearns School led Mr. Winslow to draw certain very definite conclusions in regard to the school life of the boys and girls of that particular community. He strongly felt the need of supplementing the academic work of the children, especially the boys, with activities that would train the hand as well as the head. In seeking for the kind of activity which he might experiment with, he drew upon some of his own earlier experience in life. As a younger man he had put in nearly a year in a small print shop learning the rudiments of composition and press work. Printing thus became the innovation with which he was to pioneer the way among the elementary schools of the State of Massachusetts. It is an interesting bit of history that the Stearns School was the first school of elementary rank to offer printing along with the sloyd work. Its success in Newton led to its being introduced at the Fitchburg State Normal School which has since trained many of the teachers of printing for the schools of Mass.



Money for the first equipment was secured by Mr. Winslow from some of the interested citizens of Newton and a small beginning was made under his personal direction in the fall of 1909. It was soon found that to do a sufficient quantity of work it would be necessary to have more equipment. Through the generosity of Mr. Frank A. Day of Newton the further sum of \$350 was secured. An additional press, several new fonts of type and other equipment were thus made possible. The boys did simple work such as would be needed for keeping records at the school. Pupil interest was increasingly secured because the boys were developing personal skill and at the same time doing something for the school. The boys would often stay long hours after school to work in the print shop.

In the pages of the Stearns booklet we find an account of the printing department written by one of the boys himself:

"In the fall of 1909 about two hundred dollars were raised for the Stearns School by one of our district school committee, Mr. Fred H. Tucker. With this money a printing press, and sufficient outfit for four or five boys was bought.

A class of five boys was started under the supervision of Mr. Winslow. The boys selected were from the seventh, eighth and ninth grades, and were boys whose work habits needed to be improved.

During the first four months several visitors dropped in to see our work. One of these became interested in what we were doing and saw that we needed more equipment. Through the money he was able to raise, our equipment was doubled about the last of March.

After the increase in our plant we had eight cases with type varying from six point to thirty six point. Now that the plant was doubled the number of boys was also doubled. With five beginners and five experienced boys the work was beginning to be hard to look after so Mr. Winslow appointed a foreman and a manager.

These two boys look after all the work and see that the shop is kept in good condition. This took a great deal of care off Mr. Winslow, for he can go away and feel that the printing is going along all right.

The work that has been turned out has consisted of such things as arithmetic examinations, tickets and programs for entertainments, business cards, dance orders and business flyers. A great deal of time was spent on this book and we



ask you to look it over to see for yourself what we are doing in the printing line.

Summing everything up I think it has proven a complete success. I hope that within a few years it will become regular school work. It trains the mind and gives one good work habits. I hope the work will be continued in the Stearns School for years to come. "

The hope expressed by this lad was to be realized for printing was made a part of the regular school work and was continued at the Stearns School until 1922. At that time the F.A. Day Junior High School was opened and the three upper grades were transferred from the Stearns School. The printing equipment and courses went along with these three grades.

If time permitted it would be interesting to trace the effect of this innovation in the lives of a number of the boys who had their introduction to printing at the Stearns School. Several of them subsequently followed the printing trade, going either directly to it or else going on to it after completing their high school courses. A boy by the name of William Considine went from the Stearns School to the Graphic Press in Newton and later went to work for the Boston Herald. His academic work in school improved notably after his introduction to the printing work. William Jasset, now in the employ of James F. Hughes, Newtonville printer, was another who received valuable training in the printing courses at Stearns School. The printing work inculcated the habit of carefulness and made an especial appeal to those boys who did not care for academic work.

Progress in the printing department was indicated by the appearance in 1916 of a booklet called " Stearns School Life ". The physical make-up of this booklet is a vast improvement on



the earlier Stearnanto. It is interesting because it contains what might well be called Mr. Winslow's credo about this type of activity. We give it as follows:

" I BELIEVE

1. That the school needs, and should have the support of every parent;
2. That education as given in Massachusetts in the past is not what is needed now that our people are so largely massed in cities, especially where large numbers have come from other countries;
3. That boys suffer more under present conditions having little to do in school or out which tends to make them practical, skillful, or to develop good judgment;
4. That the system which always ranks the child with a good memory high and the one without it, regardless of other qualifications, low is unfair and unfit;
5. That the child who gets well selected manual work a part of each day feels better and happier than the one who sits in a school seat five hours a day;
6. That, because of such feeling, discipline becomes easy;
7. Finally, that because of the improved relations between teacher and pupil, the greater interest in the varied work, the better virility due to more active school life, the better work habits established in the shop, the child does a greatly increased amount of academic work in a given time.

How these beliefs are leading to new lines of endeavor may be seen by looking over our schedule of manual work. Our aim is to better prepare your boys and girls for the various courses in the High and Vocational Schools, or for greater success in life.

The changes thus far made affect all seventh and eighth grade pupils, as well as over-age children in grades five and six. These all have five hours a week in the shop or work room, the time being divided into three periods.

I feel quite sure that many parents would prefer a longer school day. With our variety of work we can lengthen our weekly time from two to three hours without tiring the children any more than formerly. I believe we should do it.

DO YOU ? " 2

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<sup>2</sup>•Stearns School Life, pp. 1, 2.



Coincident with this work under Mr. Winslow at the Stearns School for those in the regular classes there should be noted the beginning of a somewhat similar type of work for boys who were distinctly not academically minded. From the Claflin, Horace Mann and the Stearns districts there were gathered a group of some fifteen boys for the so-called Industrial School. From the Annual Report of the School Committee for the year 1909 we take the following account:

" Late in 1908, a wise and public-spirited citizen ( Mr. Frank A. Day ) offered to supply half of the money needed to establish and maintain for five years a small Independent Industrial School for boys at Nonantum. Under statutory provisions, this school was opened in the Manual Training Room of the Stearns School Building on February 1, 1909, with an enrollment of fifteen, which was soon increased to eighteen.

The success of this venture was so marked that last summer the donor increased his contribution for the support of this school and there are now over forty boys in the school, with three teachers, each a practical expert in his line. The school was moved to the old Jackson building in September. The boys find here just what they need; the opportunity to learn something of practical value, - to learn a trade, - and, immediately upon completing the course they can fit into places in the industrial world and earn a larger wage than boys of like age who have not had this specific training. And there is another result; - in not a few instances, boys who had not done passable work in the grammar schools, have done good work here in all branches. In consequence, those, who under the usual conditions would have dropped out in the seventh to ninth grades, are held from one to two years longer, with much advantage to themselves and the community. The control and management of this school does not rest in the School Committee, but is vested in a Board of Trustees, composed of four members from the Board of Aldermen and three members from the School Committee, - Messers. Benjamin S. Palmer, S. E. Howard, Frank A. Day, William E. Parker, Fred H. Tucker, William J. Doherty and Matt B. Jones, whose executive officer is the Superintendent of Schools. " <sup>3</sup>

The Industrial School was continued for three years until, upon the opening of the Vocational High School, the pupils were transferred from Nonantum to Newtonville.

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<sup>3</sup>•1909 School Committee Report, pp. 10, 11.



One other innovation in the life of the school system of Newton had its inception at the Eliot School on Pearl St. Here the first special class in the city for sub-normal was started in 1906 and it continued until 1912 under the charge of Miss A. Lillian Young. Miss Annis M. Sturgis, now the psychologist for the Newton Schools, also came to the city in the same year 1906 and under her direction special classes were introduced in other parts of the city.

The Parochial schools have since 1893 taken a large number of Nonantum children. It was in that year that the Parish of the Church of Our Lady Help of Christians erected and occupied their new building at the corners of Washington and Adams Sts. An eight-room school building was constructed and occupied by the parish of St. John the Evangelist in 1927. This took away a large number of the French Catholic boys and girls from the Stearns district who had previously been enrolled at the Stearns and Eliot buildings. It is probable that the parochial schools now enroll about half of Nonantum's school population.

The growth of the Stearns School was steadily marked until in 1921 there were 600 pupils and 22 teachers. In 1922, as has been previously mentioned, the opening of the Frank A Day Junior High School meant the lopping off of the two upper grades changing the school from a full grammar to a six grade Elementary School. The pupil enrollment had increased to a high point of 700 pupils in 1931 and 25 teachers.



### Civic Elements

The traces of the civic stirrings in Nonantum seem fainter and less distinct than do the other phases of the life of the community. Possibly because Nonantum developed somewhat as a country cousin to the more populous and active Newton Corner the growth in matters which might be set down as definitely civic is not easy to record. The fact that its rural nature gave way slowly to an industrial make-up would account for the scarcity of leaders in business or professional life such as the other villages of Newton seemed to acquire in large numbers. This paucity of civic leaders and of civic initiative may well be taken as a reason why such work as the Stearns School Centre has carried on was so greatly needed.

By 1880 there were some 1835 people numbered as residents of Nonantum. By the end of the nineteenth century this had increased to approximately 3500. The analysis of the racial elements seems more properly to come under the social heading of this chapter and the above figures are given only as a passing viewpoint to hint as to the slowness of its growth.

Rowe mentions one of the very first of the civic movements to find birth in this section of the city as follows:

"A social organization called the Nonantum Athenaeum was formed in 1882. Formed on the general lines of the Young Men's Christian Association, though without its religious features, it proved popular among the young men of the village. It secured a building for thirty-seven hundred dollars, which was subscribed in advance, and there it had a hall for large gatherings, and a reading room with ten tables for games, accessible every week day." <sup>4</sup>

Perhaps the attainment of parks and playgrounds can be mentioned as marks of civic development. In Rowe's History of

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<sup>4</sup>• Rowe, opus cit. p. 231.



Newton we find that about 1891: "It seemed desirable to drain Boyd Pond at Nonantum and turn it into a playground for the children of that vicinity." This has since been known as Boyd Park. From the same source we find that in 1889: "Allison Park was laid out along the river in Nonantum in connection with the Metropolitan Park Improvements, providing baseball and football grounds at the expense of thirteen hundred dollars." A movement initiated largely by the Italian residents at a much later date resulted in the raising of funds for the acquiring of the Hawthorne St. playground in 1922. The city did the work of grading and filling in what had been more or less of a swamp to the end that a fine play field exists now directly available for the children from the Adams St. neighborhood. The Saxony Worsted Company about the same time developed an athletic field on California St. for the use of its employees and also for the benefit of the local youngsters. The Playground Department of the city took this by purchase in 1925. The influence of the playground leaders and directors has been very marked in this section of the city. The outlet for leisure time and the directing of energy into wholesome channels has been a strong factor in keeping down juvenile crime and petty misdemeanors during the summer seasons.

The Stearns Playground, which is adjacent to the school property, came along with the very distinct civic movement in connection with the purchase of the land for the school site in 1906. The late John W. Weeks who had just previously served as Mayor was interested to the extent of purchasing part of the land on which the Stearns Playground is located and that generous-



hearted benefactor of this section, Frank A Day, again enters the picture in agreeing to cover an open brook that crossed the land desired for play purposes. For a time the activities were conducted by the Nonantum Day Nursery Association during the summer vacations. Later in 1912 the direction was entirely taken over by the City Playground Department. Several local young men of whom might be named Hugh Boyd, Dr. Hymen Shrier and Gilbert Champagne have done outstanding service through their leadership on the Stearns Playground. Since 1918 the work has been under the direction of Mrs. Arthur Hovgaard. In the city-wide playground programs in which the Stearns district has taken part the training and performance of the children has been outstandingly good. In the Tercentenary Pageant of June 1930 the dances performed by the group of girls from Nonantum were a feature of the closing modern episode.

During the days of the active promotion of the Grammar School Athletic League a large athletic meet was held on the Y.M.C.A. field at Newton Corner. This meet was won by the Stearns School in 1913 as the trophy shield now hung in the corridor at the school will bear witness. Baseball and soccer championships have been frequently won by teams representing the Stearns School. If the boys did not shine scholastically they certainly showed athletic prowess to a marked degree.

Another distinctly civic movement was that in 1904 in the formation of the Nonantum Improvement League. This was the forerunner of the Nonantum Improvement Association which succeeded it in 1905. The record of this is found in Rowe's History



of Newton as follows :

" The League was active in helping to get the Waltham Street Railway through Nonantum, and suggested improvements to the municipal government, but it was short-lived. He would have found evidences of the usefulness of the Nonantum Boys' Club. Organized in 1899 with the backing of the Good Citizenship Association of Newton, the Club was soon the owner of the Athenaeum Building on Dalby St., which became a hive of activity. The building lent the lower floor to the needs of the juniors from six to eighteen years old, who soon numbered three hundred, while the upper floor was for the fifty seniors from eighteen to twenty-five years of age. They constituted the Nonantum Athletic Association. The house was kept open every week day from October to June for the use of the Nonantum boys, whether members of the Club or not. Books, games, and gymnastic apparatus were at hand for their enjoyment, and classes in various trades were maintained for several years until lack of space compelled their abandonment. Frequent entertainments were enjoyed, in which the young people of the Swedenborgian Church had a directing part. The Club with its aim to make better citizens has been a valuable means of developing character and a sense of civic responsibility among the young men of the village. " 5

Still another step along the civic road is to be noted in the establishing of the branch of the Newton Free Public Library in Nonantum in 1907. For a number of years this branch was located in the corner of the block at Watertown and Jasset Sts. While Nonantum has not been able to keep the pace with the other villages of Newton in the building of its own branch library building yet it has in its recent move to larger quarters in the building known as Columbus Hall on the corner of Adams and Watertown Sts. greatly improved its ability to serve the people of the community. In commenting upon this change Mr. Lucht, City Librarian, states that the branch was moved in Nonantum in July and that by Jan. 1st there was noted an increase in circulation of 61%. During the month of Jan. 1931 the increase over the previous year amounted to 82%. This great increase raised the standing of the Nonantum Branch from the position of eighth up to fifth among the nine branches throughout the city.

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5. Rowe, opus cit. pp. 336, 337.



It is doubted whether it were wise to touch upon the matter of political life of the section due to the probable inability to report it in any adequate manner. Newton Corner has always been largely Republican in its party allegiance and the French people of Nonantum in the more recent years have followed in that same loyalty for the most part. The fact that Nonantum has been the home of ex-Mayor Edwin O. Childs and that he has had much ardent support among the younger men of Nonantum has been an interesting feature of the civic life. The Italians as a group have shown some signs of growing leadership and adherence in more recent years. Newton Corner finally secured a Democratic Alderman with the success of William Sweeney. No doubt the proportion of those of Democratic leanings is as large in Nonantum as in other sections of the nominally Republican city of Newton.



### Social and Industrial Elements

In addition to raw materials industries need large numbers of workers. For this very obvious reason the social and the industrial story will be told as one. As has been referred to in the introduction to this chapter this whole section of the modern village of Nonantum was originally a farm section. From Rowe's History of Newton we get a word as to its size and ownership at the end of the eighteenth century. "A mile north of Newtonville the farms of John Fuller and Richard Park lay along the river in colonial times. Together they included about thirteen hundred and fifty acres. On that farm grew up eventually the village of Nonantum. Its prosperity was insured when David Bemis undertook paper manufacturing during the Revolution. After his death in 1790 three sons carried on successfully a variety of manufacturing. The brothers Luke and Isaac conservatively followed the policy of their father until Isaac died, when Luke associated with himself Caleb Eddy, his brother-in-law. Already a bridge had been built across the river, and the family interests shortly expanded on both the Newton and Watertown sides."

This close connection with this old manufacturing section of Waltham is recorded because Nonantum became the place of residence for many of the workers in the busy mills at Bemis. Another artery which helped to make closer this bond was noted by Mr. Rowe.

" California St. was constructed in 1816 and extended over the bridge at Bemis Factories, as it was called then. Parts of the bridge were carried away by freshets twice during the early part of the century. On California St. Celia Thaxter, the



poetess, lived for a time. The presence of foreign laborers in the mills gave the village a shady reputation for illegal liquor selling until late in the century." <sup>6</sup>

This juxtaposition of the residence of the poetess and the evil of the liquor trade will serve to indicate that in Nonantum the light and the shadow have both found a home!

By 1860 one of the large mills on the Bemis side of the river had become the Aetna Manufacturing Company, engaged in the business of woolen manufacture. One of the earliest racial groups to locate in Nonantum were a company of English people who are recorded to have helped form a nucleus for the beginnings of Grace Episcopal Church at Newton Corner in 1855. Other industries were having their start at about the same period, as we learn by Mr. Rowe's narrative.

" Nonantum proved to be one of the most actively employed parts of the town. There in 1852 Thomas Dalby, an Englishman, started the business of manufacturing hosiery. This developed into the Dalby Mills Company, which did a large business until after the Civil War when it failed. The property was bought by Lewis Coleman of Boston, but in 1871 one of the large buildings went up in flames.

The Silver Lake Company was planned and chartered for the manufacture of solid braided cord and steam packing. It commenced operations in 1866 on a capital of eighty thousand dollars, occupying a four-story brick building on Nevada St. The business failed after three years and a new company was formed, which proved successful.

The largest business enterprise at Nonantum was the Nonantum Worsted Company, which was organized in 1867 with a capital of half a million dollars for the purpose of manufacturing worsted yarn. It bought out the Dalby Company, making additions and gaining a reputation until it was employing six hundred operatives. But the business depression of the early nineties affected the industry and in 1896 the Company voted to go out of business. " <sup>7</sup>

A sidelight on the nationality of the early settlers of Nonantum is afforded by the fact that in 1865 the Nonantum Cricket Club was formed. It is a matter of history that in

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<sup>6</sup>•Rowe, opus cit. p. 79

<sup>7</sup>•Rowe, opus cit. p. 146



September 1866, the Nonantum Club defeated the second eleven of the New York Cricket Club by the score of 109 to 87. Thus these English mill workers kept to their traditional national sport even in the land of their adoption.

As the century wore on to a close new racial elements were added in the advent of groups of Irish and French workers. Again turning to Mr. Rowe we learn :

" Nonantum continued to be a thriving manufacturing village with a population of about three thousand, made up chiefly of Irish, English and French Canadians. The Silver Lake Company, manufacturing braided cord and steam packing, doubled its capacity by making extensive additions, and in 1890 had an annual business valued at three hundred thousand dollars. In similar fashion the Nonantum Worsted Company made addition to its plant for the manufacture of its famous " Starlight " worsteds, and the Company bought a controlling interest in the Newton Machine Company, which manufactured woolen machinery close by. " <sup>8</sup>

It is well known of course that after the close of the Civil War severe famine in Ireland led to the immigration to this country of large numbers of the Irish farmers. It was but natural that they should move out from Boston to a section where there was land enough for the making of gardens as was possible in Nonantum. Their entering into the mills and factories led to even more of them coming.

The migration of the French-Canadians to Nonantum was a part of the invasion of the industrial centers of New England by the hundreds of thousands of these people who thus became a part of the skilled labor of our mill cities. A very fine article entitled " Fifty-fifty Americans " found in the World's Work for August, 1924, will give the reader a vivid picture of the coming of these French-Canadians. The exact date for the

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<sup>8</sup> Rowe, opus cit. p. 208



first French settlers in Nonantum is not available but it was probably close to 1880. More came during the decade from 1885 to 1895.

It is a bit interesting to see where these various racial elements settled within the community. The English took up their abode along California St. in order to be near the mills. The Irish were found chiefly in the section between Watertown St. and Washington St. merging into the Newton Corner section near Jackson Road. The French-Canadians filled in the territory north of Watertown St. in the direction of California St. and the Charles River.

One of the older industries of the village was the Saxony Worsted Mills which were started in 1900. Many of the new settlers mentioned just above found employment with this concern. The United States Census of Manufactures showed that in 1914 this concern had six hundred employees at work in its plant. The rise and fall of the typical American industrial plant is shown in this instance in that during the great post-war industrial depression which was so acute particularly in New England between 1920 and 1930 the Saxony Mills were closed altogether, never to reopen. The Silver Lake Cordage Company, like many other New England Cotton manufacturers, found it advisable to move to Georgia, where it could employ women workers at a lower wage.

To bring the story up to the present makes it necessary to mention two other paragraphs from Rowe.

" Since the character of Newton was residential rather



than industrial, the expansion of business was mainly in real estate and banking and in retail stores. New industries located within city limits from time to time, most of them small in capitalization and amount of business; sometimes expansion was far beyond what might have been anticipated at the beginning. An example of such growth was the Earnshaw Knitting Company of Chicago, manufacturers of infants' garments, which moved part of its plant to Newton in 1920. A portion of the Shepherd Worsted Mills property on California St. was occupied, but only twelve persons were employed at the outset. During the decade the buildings were enlarged and within seven years the Company was employing five hundred persons. Several other knitting mills were in operation.

Certain of the new industries were indicative of changing fashions and novel interests. Two of the new business concerns which located on the north side of the city were the Raython Manufacturing Company, which made radio tubes, and the National Packaging Machinery Company, which manufactured machinery for turning out packages for various goods. " <sup>9</sup>

The racial stocks thus far noted as having located in Nonantum were either from North Europe or from Eastern Canada. In common with other sections of the country Nonantum saw the beginnings of the tide of immigration from southern Europe in the last decade of the nineteenth century. It is significant the racial classification, as shown by the Newton Directory of 1889, accounted for twenty-nine hundred persons of Irish extraction, twelve hundred and seventy-five French Canadians, six hundred who were of English origin, and only five Italians. These figures are for the whole of Newton rather than the Nonantum village.

Two lines of industry were the original reasons for attracting large numbers of the Italians to Newton. The first of these was the advance of the Metropolitan Sewerage System which reached the city in 1891. The second project was the immense task of lowering the Boston and Albany railroad tracks. Rowe makes mention of this great undertaking:

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<sup>9</sup>• Rowe, opus cit. p. 461



" Mayor Bothfield's health did not permit his continuance in office beyond the single year of 1895, but the wisdom of his plan for the depression of the tracks became recognized by agreement of the railroad, the city and the state. The railroad planned to abandon its freight yards at Newton and Newtonville, and provide a new one at Newtonville, where the Company had bought twenty acres from the Claflin estate. Newton was to have a new station. It was agreed that the railroad would pay sixty-five percent of the cost of reconstruction, the state twenty-five per cent, and the city ten percent. The total cost was approximately two and a quarter million dollars. The work of reconstruction was costly and laborious. The running of trains must not be interfered with seriously, so that all the tracks could not be depressed at once. Seventy-one houses and twenty-five blocks had to be removed. The enterprise was not completed until 1898. " <sup>10</sup>

When these two great undertakings were completed the Italian laborers stayed on, finding employment in other smaller construction jobs throughout the city. The laying of local water and sewer mains, gardening, digging of cellars, road construction and repairs, and other varieties of " pick and shovel " work were the means by which this group obtained their livelihood. Their coming in such increasing numbers was to change the complexion of the Nonantum community in many ways. Their strangeness to our language, our laws and our standards of living at once created problems for themselves and those who sought to help them.

It is a bit difficult to get accurate figures on the numbers of Italians living in Nonantum at the present time. However the United States Census reports for the following years these figures for all Italians living in the City of Newton. In 1910 they numbered 1198, in 1915 they had increased to 2722 and by 1920 the figure was 3218. By making allowance for certain people of the race who were living in

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<sup>10</sup>• Rowe, opus cit. p. 284



West Newton and other sections it will be seen that a very considerable Italian population now lives in Nonantum.

Coming down to the present as to the racial proportions in the current school enrollment at the Stearns School, a recent survey indicated some eleven nationalities. With the Italians bulking away in the majority, the Italians, French and Hebrews constituted 90% of the school population, leaving a few American, Irish, Negro and a scattering of other races to make up the remaining 10%.



### Religious Elements

If a writer of the stamp of Harold Begbie were seeking the material for a miniature epic of an out-reaching soul on fire with a zeal to bring the teachings of the Great Teacher to those in humble circumstances, he would have to go no further than to Nonantum. Around 1860 a young Scotch-Irishman, by the name of Samuel E. Lowry, had come to this country. Finding employment as a clerk in the department store of John Gilchrist, one of the forerunners of the present Jordan Marsh Company of Boston, he came out to Newton Corner to live. Here he identified himself with the Eliot Congregational Church.

From some of the church people of Watertown there had come rumors that the settlements on either side of the river near Bemis were particularly God-less. Mr. Lowry set out one Sunday afternoon to look things over for himself. In walking through this part of Nonantum and Bemis, he met with a number of unkempt children who answered his query as to whether they ever attended Sunday School in the negative. The earnest young clerk told some of these children that he would like to have them meet him the next Sunday afternoon. True to his word, on Sunday June 2, 1861, and for several Sundays thereafter, Mr. Lowry met a troupe of children on the platform of the Bemis railway station. A rainy Sunday made it necessary to seek shelter within doors and the kitchen of a friendly family near by was used for the meeting of the embryo Sunday School.



Turning to Rowe once more, we find this epic thus briefly told :

" Samuel E. Lowry of the Eliot Church, Newton, a young business man, interested a few persons to start a Sunday School at Bemis Station in 1861. The next year he had won the assistance of Thomas Dalby, the manufacturer, who gave a small piece of land near his factory. Another parcel of land was contributed by Seth Bemis and enough money was raised to build a chapel, which was enlarged three years later. In 1866 a church was organized; fifteen of the members were released from the Eliot Church and eight from other churches. Lowry, who had been studying for the ministry, was ordained and installed as pastor of the church. The present church edifice was constructed in 1873 to replace the chapel which had been burned. For eleven years more the energetic, lovable pastor was able to build himself and his church into the hearts and the life of the industrial community, but in 1884 he died. "<sup>11</sup>

One familiar with the history of the church has described the inhabitants of the parish at that time as " old time stockingers " many of whom had a great fondness for " booze. " Mr. Lowry was a " terror " against drinking and during the summer seasons organized church picnics and parties to get the men away from the other influences.

Following Mr. Lowry were Rev. William Lamb whose pastorate lasted until 1892 and Rev. Daniel Greene who served until 1899.

Next in succession came a Rev. Henry E. Oxnard who was a graduate of Andover Seminary. During his time the church organ was secured and an addition to the church was built. In certain respects he was thought by his parishioners to be quite progressive. He was instrumental in changing the time of meeting of the Sunday School from the afternoon to the noon hour following the morning service. This change meant the loss of several teachers who had come over from the Eliot Church for the afternoon session. Mr. Oxnard was pastor from 1900 to

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<sup>11</sup>. Rowe, opus cit. p. 131



1910.

After Mr. Oxnard came Rev. Charles L. Merriam who served until 1914. The next incumbent was Rev. Robert L. Rae whose fifteen years as pastor constituted the longest term in the history of the church. Mr. Rae was active in the general life of the community as well as among his own parishioners. The Rev. Everett E. Bachelder is the present pastor of this sixty-five years old North Congregational Church. The Sunday School has ever been one of the major interests of Mr. William E. Lowry, who is the son of the founder and first pastor. The Sunday School has the distinction - most unusual in these days - of having never closed for the summer vacation but continuing for the fifty-two sessions each year.

In a community with as many of Irish descent the establishment of a Catholic church was a natural outcome. The Church of Our Lady Help of Christians, at Washington and Adams Sts., was founded in Nov. 1872 by the Rev. Father Michael M. Green, who continued as pastor for ten years until his death. He founded the church as a mission of the Watertown Catholic Church. At the time of his decease more than four thousand persons were included in his parish. A considerable proportion of the members were residents of Nonantum. The establishment of a parochial grammar school by this church has been previously mentioned.

A combination of zeal and hard work tell the story of the founding of the French Catholic Church at Nonantum, by Father Robichaud. A Protestant layman tells of making a friendly call upon the newly arrived clergyman soon after his



advent from Marlboro, Mass. He found the young priest quartered in a private home occupying a single room with a desk and a chair. "Here I am", he remarked, "to found a new church. Money I have none but we'll do it somehow". How well he succeeded is recorded by Mr. Rowe :

"The Catholic church at Nonantum was organized as the parish of St. John the Evangelist in 1911. It has had only one spiritual director, Reverend Joseph D. Robichaud, who came from Marlboro to his new charge. A native of Canada, he was well prepared to minister to the Nonantum folk. Under his leadership he brought the people from the wooden building on Dalby St. where they worshipped at first into a church building which should serve their needs until the parish should be able to afford a more complete structure. A rectory of ample size was constructed on Watertown St., and an eightroom school building soon arose on the same landed property. With a highly esteemed pastor and a growing body of laity the parish looks forward to a steady gain in numbers and equipment."<sup>12</sup>

One other group of worshippers was striving to lay foundations at this time. A considerable number of Jews coming to the city made them wish to organize for religious purposes, and in 1912 the corner stone of a synagogue was laid for the congregation Agudath Achim on Adams St.

Just as a sidelight on the friendly relations which have existed between the people of different faiths in the community, mention is made of a dinner tendered to Father Robichaud, in 1926, as a testimonial on the completion of fifteen years of his pastorate. The dinner was served in the basement of the Catholic church on dishes which were loaned for the occasion by the Protestant North Congregational Church. There were in attendance folk representing all the community, all equally generous in their desire to honor the devoted pastor of the Catholic church.

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<sup>12</sup>. Rowe, opus cit. p. 206



CHAPTER II.

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE NONANTUM DAY NURSERY ASSOCIATION -

ITS SUPPORTERS

One quarter of a century is not such a long period of time but that the story of the early days of the Nonantum Day Nursery - as the forerunner of the Stearns School Centre was called - can be learned from the lips of those who were its active founders. Even if one had to get all of it from the pages of the records as kept by an enthusiastic and unflagging secretary, there would still be something of the youth and energy of the pioneering group of devoted workers available for those who seek to make it live itself again. Fortunately a combination of the two methods has made the exploration of the writer into the history of the beginnings both pleasant and profitable.

Something of the spirit of noblesse oblige seems to have been responsible for the inception of the undertaking, for it was the discerning heart and mind of Miss Annie Ellis, a granddaughter of Governor William Claflin, who sensed the crying need for some place where the working women of Nonantum could leave their children during the busy day. Three other generous-hearted women of Newtonville - Mrs. A. P. Carter, Mrs. L. T. Sawyer, and Mrs. G. H. Wilkins, were stirred to action along with Miss Ellis to the point that in the spring of 1906 they raised among themselves enough money to hire a few rooms in the so-called Bogan House, at the corner of Watertown and Adams Sts., where, with a Miss



Emerson, a nurse, in charge, a Day Nursery was started.

These few rooms were soon taxed to capacity and in the fall of 1906 this group called together a larger company to undertake the formation of an Association to carry on the work.

Through the kindness of the present Clerk of the Stearns School Centre, Mrs. G. W. Auryansen, the records of the first Clerk of the Day Nursery, Mrs. G. H. Wilkins, have been made available to me and from them I take the account of that first gathering of the larger group.

" On Tuesday afternoon, October sixteenth, a meeting was held at the home of Mrs. Marcus Morton for the purpose of forming an Association to take charge of the Day Nursery, already established at Nonantum.

Twenty women, representing Newton, Newtonville, and West Newton, were present.

Miss Ellis, through whose untiring efforts, aided by those of Mrs. A. P. Carter and Mrs. L. T. Sawyer, the Nursery has been established and conducted for many months, presided.

Briefly, but with the convincing force of a fine enthusiasm, Miss Ellis spoke of the great need at Nonantum for the kind of social service which the Day Nursery would represent, of the generous response already met from those who can help, and from those who gladly avail themselves of this form of service.

That this undertaking can be successfully prosecuted has been amply proven by the facts reported from the experience of these three who could offer the Association to be formed, a well-equipped plant, with a trained nurse and kindergartner in charge, and a substantial balance in the treasury. The sentiment of the meeting was voiced in the acceptance of the report of Miss Ellis, and the adoption of the recommendation that an Association be formed to conduct the work already in successful operation.

Miss Ellis presented the following list of officers nominated to serve the Association.

President, Mrs. J. P. Tolman  
Treasurer, Mrs. Rebecca B. Sherman  
Secretary, Mrs. G. H. Wilkins  
Investigator, Mrs. Walter Hosley



These were elected to their several offices. Plans for the organization of the Association were informally discussed.

When the newly elected President had taken the chair, Mrs. H. H. Carter moved, that in view of the fundamental importance to any organization of a Constitution and By-laws, a Committee be appointed to report to this meeting a preliminary form of organization.

This motion was carried and a Committee, comprising the three founders, Miss Ellis, Mrs. A. P. Carter, and Mrs. L. T. Sawyer together with Mrs. H. H. Carter and Mrs. Morton, was appointed.

After a brief recess, this committee reported through Mrs. H. H. Carter a preliminary draft of a Constitution which was approved by the Association.

Mrs. Carter also read from the report of the South End Day Nursery, the object for which such an organization is formed and the ends which it should strive to serve.

A call was then made for volunteers to serve upon the Board of Visitors, to which there was ready response.

The following were duly appointed Visitors.

1. Miss Annie Ellis
2. Mrs. L.T. Sawyer
3. Mrs. Albert P. Carter
4. Mrs. John Lockett
5. Mrs. E.W. Greene
6. Mrs. F.E. Jones
7. Mrs. John N. Eaton
8. Mrs. Joseph Lovell
9. Mrs. Eben Ellison
10. Mrs. E.K. Hall
11. Mrs. Sidney Harwood
12. Miss Louise Lovett

To the Board of Directors were appointed the following.

1. Mrs. Marcus Morton
2. Mrs. J.W. Carter
3. Mrs. E.W. Converse
4. Mrs. A.W. Cole
5. Mrs. Walter Holbrook
6. Mrs. F.S. Pratt
7. Mrs. Charles Meserve
8. Mrs. Sidney Harwood
9. Mrs. Charles Leonard
10. Mrs. Ralph Angier

Voted that a committee of three be appointed to draw up a Constitution and By-laws to be presented to the Association at a meeting to be called in the near future.

The President, with Mrs. H.H. Carter and Miss Annie Ellis, was appointed to that Committee.

A Committee consisting of Mrs. Marcus Morton and Mrs. J.W. Carter was appointed to fill all vacancies in the Directorate.



There being no further business to come before this meeting, adjourned, to meet on Wednesday morning, October twenty-fourth, at the home of Mrs. A.P. Carter.

Sara S. Wilkins, Secretary. "

This business-like beginning of the Association rather indicates that the workers of the " weaker sex " were making rapid progress in the ability to get together and work together after the fashion of their more advantaged and practiced " men folks ". At the subsequent adjourned meeting on October twenty-fourth, the Constitution was duly reported and adopted as follows :

**"Constitution of the Nonantum Day Nursery Association"**

Article I - Name

This Association shall be called "The Nonantum Day Nursery Association".

Article II - Object

The object of this Association shall be,

To provide a place where mothers, who are wage-earners, may leave their children during working hours; and to aid them in the moral and physical training of their children.

Article III - Membership

This Association shall consist of all those who shall contribute annually, one dollar or more towards the maintenance of the Nursery.

Article IV - Officers

The officers of this Association shall be a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, a Treasurer and an Investigator.

These officers, together with a Board of twenty or more Directors, and a Board of twelve regular Visitors and twelve Substitute Visitors, shall constitute an Executive Board, for the transaction of the business of the Association. The officers and the other members of the Board shall be elected annually. Vacancies occurring during the year may be filled by the Executive Board.



Article V - Duties

1. The President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer shall perform such duties as usually pertain to their offices.
2. The Investigator shall visit the homes of all children received at the Day Nursery, and ascertain, when needful, the conditions under which the parents work, reporting the same to the Executive Board. She shall have the authority to debar a child temporarily, from the Nursery, but shall refer questions regarding the permanent exclusion of a child to the President of the Association and to the Visitor who is the Chairman for the month.
3. The Directors shall solicit the Annual membership fees and forward them to the Treasurer.
4. Some one Visitor or Substitute shall visit the Nursery daily.

The Visitors shall appoint each month, from their own number, a Chairman, to whom they shall make daily reports. If emergencies arise which the Visitor of the day is unable to meet, she shall report them to the Chairman, who shall have authority to act upon them. The Chairman may authorize the expenditure of sums of money not exceeding five dollars for the month. Larger sums must be referred to the Executive Board. The Visitor shall visit the homes of the children whenever it seems wise to do so.

Article VI - Meetings

The Annual Meeting of the Association shall be held the fourth Tuesday of January. Regular meetings of the Executive Board shall be held the fourth Tuesday of each month from September to June, inclusive. Regular meetings of the Board of Visitors shall be held one half hour before this meeting. Special meetings may be called by the President and shall be called upon request of any three members of the Executive Board.

Article VII - Quorum

Seven members shall constitute a quorum, both for the meetings of the Association and of the Executive Board.

Article VIII - Nominations

A Committee of three shall be appointed by the Executive Board at its meeting in November, to nominate officers for the ensuing year, and to report at the Annual Meeting.



Article IX - Amendments

These articles may be amended at any meeting of the Association by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting, provided a notice of the proposed amendments has been given in the call for the meeting. "

The early meetings of the Board of the Association were held in the homes of the various members or in the parlors of certain of the Newton churches. From the pages of the Secretary's records the following bits give us intimations of some of the thrills, the difficulties and the problems confronted by the new organizations.

Nov. 27, 1906. "The opening of two additional rooms at the Nursery was an event of great interest and importance to the success of the work. A number of gifts had already been received, so that they already present a comfortable and attractive appearance."

"The attendance is, from the nature of things, variable. On Monday and Tuesday, from twenty-four to twenty-seven; dropping on Thursday and Friday, to fifteen or sixteen; while on Saturday the average is twelve."

"The children are chiefly of Irish parentage, though there are Jews, Hungarians, Italians and Negroes among them."

"At present, there is a sufficient supply of bed-linen, 2 barrels of potatoes, apples, toys and a ton of coal had been received. The needs presented were for; crib-pillows, or little square pillows, underclothing, dimity spreads, floor covering for the room used as an office, and always, fruit. Also a good picture of Longfellow, and copies of the favorite Madonnas, framed, are desired, for the walls, which have as yet received little attention."

Dec. 18, 1906. "One child, slightly indisposed on that day, was sent, two days later to the Newton Hospital with Diphtheria. Prompt and vigorous action was taken, by the Chairman of the Board of Visitors. The rooms were thoroughly fumigated, the Nursery remaining closed until Monday. All dishes and other articles used by the children were thoroughly boiled and every precaution taken. No new cases resulted. The attendance had not been as large as the preceding month because of illness among the children or in the homes, which kept the mothers at home."



"Many valuable suggestions had been received from Miss Small, a successful paid Investigator, who spoke before the Visitors, at the home of Mrs. Hosley, our own Investigator, on the preceding Friday."

Dec. 18, 1906. "The question of a set of rules for the guidance of the Visitors at the Nursery, was presented by the Chair. A motion, by Mrs. Sawyer, that a Committee of three be appointed to visit other Day Nurseries for material upon which to base the formation of a set of rules to be adopted by this Day Nursery, was carried."

Jan. 29, 1907. "The case most difficult to adjust satisfactorily had been that of two Italian children, whose mother could speak no English, and was consequently unable to obtain work except in the mill. It was impossible to admit the children to the Nursery at the early hour at which the mill opens. Investigation and consultation with Mrs. Martin, (Mrs. Mary R. Martin, for twenty-three years the Secretary of the local Associated Charities) revealed the fact that the city was giving the woman \$2.00 per month and would give \$3.00. so it was deemed advisable to make no further attempt to provide for them at the Nursery."

"An attempt had been made to overcome the difficulties in the way of regular out-door exercise for the children. The most feasible scheme seemed to provide movable platforms, or piazzas, upon which the children could play, and the baby carriages be placed."

"At the Nurseries carried on by Mrs. Quincy Shaw, a most novel method of nap-taking was used for the older children. At a stated time, they drew their chairs up to the kindergarten tables; a little pillow was given each child, who placed the pillow on the table, his head upon the pillow and in most ( ??? much questioning here by the father of two active pre-kindergarten boys! ) cases, dropped off to sleep."

"A motion was presented by Mrs. Meserve for the incorporation of the Nursery."

"Voted that a Committee be appointed to investigate the matter of better housing for the Nursery. To this Committee were appointed - Mrs. Meserve, Mrs. Breck and Mrs. E. K. Hall."

"The monthly report of the Treasurer, Mrs. Sherman, showed that the amount in the treasury, on January 1, was \$1089.20. Received from membership fees and donations \$185.00, making the total receipts - \$1274.20. The expenditures had amounted to \$132.96, leaving a balance on hand of \$1141.24. This report was approved as was also the Annual Statement of



the Treasurer, which followed. From this statement was gleaned the interesting information that the total receipts of the Association to date, have been \$1778.86: the total expenditures, \$637.62, leaving a balance in the treasury of \$1141.24. The Treasurer has received 128 subscriptions ranging from one dollar each, to one hundred dollars; of this number probably 108 will be annual subscriptions."

From the above it will be seen that matters of housing, equipment, methods of visitation, admission of children, program, the daily routine, and finance all lept into the foreground and were adequately delt with. At this same Annual Meeting in January 1907 two changes in the Officers are noted. Miss Grace Weston becomes the first one to hold the office of Vice President and a Miss Drury, succeeds Mrs. Hosley as Investigator.

Members of the Boards elected at the Annual Meeting in January, 1907 -

Board of Directors

1. Mrs. Marcus Morton
2. Mrs. A.W. Cole
3. Mrs. Charles Meserve
4. Mrs. Philip Carter
5. Mrs. W.H. Lucas
6. Mrs. C.W. Ellis
7. Mrs. F.S. Pratt
8. Mrs. Charles Leonard
9. Mrs. Harry L. Burrage
10. Mrs. W.B.H. Douse
11. Mrs. Henry B. Day
12. Miss Louise Lovett
13. Mrs. Charles Gibson
14. Mrs. Robert Gorham
15. Mrs. Percival Howe
16. Mrs. D.G. Wing
17. Mrs. E.W. Converse
18. Mrs. Walter Holbrook
19. Mrs. Ralph Angier
20. Mrs. W.E. Jones
21. Mrs. Atherton Clark
22. Mrs. Charles Painter
23. Mrs. Charles Whittemore
24. Mrs. A.B. Turner

Board of Visitors

1. Miss Annie Ellis
2. Mrs. A.P. Carter
3. Mrs. L.T. Sawyer
4. Mrs. E.W. Greene
5. Mrs. E.K. Hall
6. Mrs. John E. Lockett
7. Mrs. F.E. Jones
8. Mrs. John N. Eaton
9. Mrs. Joseph N. Lovell
10. Miss Louise Lovett
11. Mrs. Sidney Harwood
12. Mrs. Eben Ellison

Board of Substitute  
Visitors

1. Mrs. H.H. Carter
2. Mrs. L.B. Renfrew
3. Mrs. H.P. Talbot
4. Mrs. E.P. Hurd
5. Miss Florence Taylor
6. Mrs. John Holmes
7. Mrs. W.C. Warren
8. Mrs. F.H. Loveland



25. Mrs. Andrew B. Cobb	9. Miss Elizabeth Lancaster
26. Mrs. J.W. Carter	10. Mrs. J.A. Simpson
27. Mrs. Frank A. Day	11. Mrs. J.B. Stewart
28. Mrs. Charles H. Breck	12. Mrs. Eleanor Nichols
29. Mrs. E.B. Haskell	
30. Mrs. H.A. Thorndike	
31. Mrs. S.H. Woodbridge	
32. Mrs. Calvert Crary	

The matter of incorporation was duly carried out and on February 16, 1907, with the legal help and advice of Mr. Albert P. Carter, the Association took on a legal entity. As giving another intimate picture of the details of the work the Association was attempting we next give the Standing Committees and the Rules for Nursery which were adopted in March 1907.

" Voted that the Board of Directors shall at the Annual Meeting or as soon thereafter as practicable, appoint the following committees.

A. Finance    B. House    C. Case    D. Hygiene

Duties of Committees

**A. Finance.** The Finance Committee shall consist of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and not less than seven Directors. It shall have charge of the ways and means of raising funds and bringing the work before the public.

**B. House.** The House Committee shall consist of three Directors. It shall have full authority in the management of the Nursery, including the use of the house for other purposes and the hiring and discharging of all employees, subject to confirmation by the Board of Directors to whom they shall make a monthly report. It shall appoint from the Directors a Board of Visitors, who shall elect monthly from their own number, a Chairman to whom all visitors shall report. This Chairman shall act with the House Committee during her term of service.

**C. Case.** ( Investigating ) The Case Committee shall consist of the regularly appointed Investigator as Chairman, and two Directors. This Committee shall visit the homes of all children received at the Day Nursery and shall ascertain, when needful, the conditions under which the parents work, reporting the same to the Board of Directors. It shall have authority to debar a child temporarily from the Nursery, but shall refer any questions regarding the permanent exclusion of the child to the House Committee.



D. Hygiene. The Committee on Hygiene shall have the duty of enforcing the rules on Hygiene adopted by the Board of Directors.

Rules for the Nursery

1. Children between the ages of 6 months and six years shall be admitted to the Nursery daily (except Sunday) from 7:45 A.M. to 6 P.M. (Note. These hours may be extended in exceptional cases.)
2. No child shall be admitted permanently without careful investigation by the Investigator or some member of the Investigating Committee.
3. Children may be admitted when both father and mother are obliged to work to preserve the home, and must, therefore, neglect the child; or when older children have to be kept from school to take care of the younger ones; and any child may be admitted temporarily when there is no sickness at home, which is not contagious, or conditions exist which justify such admission.
4. Children who have outgrown the Nursery and are attending school in the neighborhood may be admitted under the same rules.
5. Children must be kept neat and clean while in the Nursery. It is very important that they come from their homes, clean in person and in clothing. The matron shall seek to attain this end by constant suggestion to the parent or guardian.
6. No personal remarks shall be made about the children, their parents or their homes in the presence of any child belonging to the Nursery.
7. No corporal punishment shall be allowed nor restraint of any kind, by tying or otherwise, nor shutting up in any closet, whether light or dark. Punishment, when necessary, shall be such as placing a child apart from others, or by depriving him of the toys or pleasure which may be connected with difficulty.
8. A fee of ten cents, daily, shall be required for each child admitted, when both parents are wage earners; of five cents, when only one is a wage earner.
9. Daily payments shall be required, except in cases where the wages are received weekly.

As the spring of 1907 came on the need for securing larger quarters for the Nursery became more apparent. The



Committee whose appointment was noted in the minutes of the Jan. 29th meeting had been diligently at work and their findings were made known at a special meeting of the Board of Directors.

April 3, 1907. " Mrs. Meserve, Chairman of the Committee appointed to secure new quarters for the Nursery, reported for the Committee. An interesting but arduous pursuit of the house designated as the old " Dr. Stearns " house on Watertown St., had for sometime occupied a goodly proportion of the time and diplomatic skill of the Committee. There seemed no reason to suppose that this house could not be secured as soon as the tenant occupying it removed, on April 15, following. The Committee with the President had been permitted to look over the house, and believed it to be by far the most promising location available in Nonantum. Though an old house, it seemed in fairly good condition, possessed of the needed furnace, bathroom, and gas. A good yard in the rear of the house; apparently good drainage and convenient quarters for the workers to be in residence, were also noted. It was unanimously voted that the Association take a lease of this property, at a rental of \$25. per month. "

April 30, 1907. " We have engaged the house, No. 281 Watertown St., commonly called the " Dr. Stearns House", owned by Mr. Mason Stearns and his sisters, the Misses Charlotte and Ethelyn Stearns, for the Nonantum Day Nursery Association. Mr. E.K. Hall, our attorney in the case, has drawn up a lease, which has been signed by the lessors. We take a lease for two years and tried to get an option for the third but they refused that.

" There is a large yard at the back of the house, a pleasant veranda in front and a grape arbor at the side door, with a board floor, also a number of fruit trees at the front and rear. The house has twelve rooms and a large unfinished attic. The furnace is said to be in good condition, and there are several fireplaces. The owners will connect the bathroom with hot water, putting in a new bowl; also connect the kitchen sink, and fix two small places where the plastering needs attention. We are to put in a lavatory downstairs, in a small room in the back of the front hall, at our expense and have promised to remove it, leaving everything in good condition when we leave. We promised to look after inside repairs, and in doing that, and taking the lease, we shoulder the blame for accidents that might occur, with so many small children in the house, which seemed to be a bugbear to Mr. Jenks, the agent. "

Committees were immediately appointed to further the preparations to occupy the new house and the labors involved



were divided into these sub-headings: inside repairs, yard and grounds, and furnishings. Progress was certainly made as the next report will indicate.

May 28, 1907. " Plans for the formal opening of the new Nursery quarters were discussed. It was decided that this opening be held Saturday, June the 8th, in the form of a reception and donation party. Voted that the reception be held from 4 to 8 P.M. "

June 25, 1907. " Miss Lancaster reported for the Visitors the fact of most importance, the moving into the new house; and the progress of the Nursery under new management, with better equipment. There had been purchased for the house table-cloths, napkins, table silver, dishes, kitchen-utensils, straps for high chairs, etc., amounting in value to \$25. generously contributed by friends of the Nursery. Voted that the Committee in charge at the opening of the new house receive the hearty thanks of the Association for the splendid service in successfully conducting that affair. "

Sept. 24, 1907. " The Chairman of the House Committee reported progress during the summer in the administration of the Nursery, and in enlarging the scope and usefulness of our neighborhood work. "

" Miss Turner, after a vacation agreed upon when engaged to take charge, has been a month in residence. During the summer, Miss Howard, the Assistant has lived at the Stearns Neighborhood House, and taken charge very successfully of the work. Miss Turner, upon invitation, spoke very informally of the immediate needs, and of plans for the work which convinced all present of the ability of our head worker to carry forward the work which it is the aim of the Association to accomplish in this neighborhood. "

Oct. 22, 1907. " The need for, and the hope of a large neighborhood service from the head-worker which should make the Stearns House the center of a constantly widening influence for good in this Community was described, briefly. The meeting was addressed by Miss Turner, who described a Day in the Nursery, giving details of management and telling of the beginning of the Neighborhood work, growing out of the daily life of the Nursery. "

Nov. 26, 1907. " It becomes increasingly evident, that there is great need for just such ministration, in this Community, as Stearns Neighborhood House stands for. It is becoming known and used by the children as the place where can be found unfailing interest in them and their needs. The special cases which had been investigated by Miss Turner presented problems of unusual interest and difficulty. The trained, sympathetic, sane treatment of their problems by our Head-worker, was most



convincing. It did not require unusual powers of imagination to see very clearly what splendid, constructive work, along lines untouched by other organizations, may be done by our Association as it is now equipped. "

These last two excerpts from the records of these first few months in the newly occupied Stearns House show very clearly the prophetic hope and vision of the founders of this organization. The expansion along the lines of neighborhood and community activities was to slowly, but surely, cause the nursery phase of the work to decrease in importance and usefulness. These pioneers could only peer into the future and intuitively sense forms of service not yet entered upon by others.

One of the features of social settlement work in general use in industrial communities at that time was the encouragement of the habit of thrift by the sale of Savings Stamps. Calls were made at homes and at factories under certain conditions for the sale of these stamps in small denominations. The first mention of the introduction of this system by the Day Nursery was in Feb. 1908, when some 30 depositors had begun to purchase the stamps. From then on the list of depositors grew rapidly.

The organization of Clubs was to be a new and growing part of the program from this time on. In this same month of Feb. 1908, mention was made of the enthusiasm exhibited in the little girls' clubs and leaders were asked for to develop two boys' clubs. Also a dancing class was undertaken at this time. A Monday evening club for mothers was functioning by March, 1908, under the direction of Mrs. Kempton, one of the early volunteers.



Apr. 28, 1908. " The Case Committee reported that four cases had been dropped from the Nursery, because there no longer existed a need that the mothers contribute to the support of the families. These mothers received the notice in the right spirit, and will retain their connection with the House through membership in the Clubs. "

" Miss Turner referred the need of a dentist's services for the children. "

" Mrs. Keyes presented the problem of the Girls' Club, which she felt to be acute. The members of the Board expressed deep sympathy with the work of the Club and the earnest hope that the work might not be abandoned. While the Board of Directors did not feel like assuming the control or management of the Club, the members expressed willingness to assist in the work as far as they were able, and to interest others in supporting the work, during the coming winter. "

" Much outside work, some of a most trying nature, had been assumed by the workers. Friendly visiting had been extensively carried on. "

In view of the subsequent transplanting of the activities of the Nursery Association from the Stearns House to the Stearns School Building, it is of moment to note the first mention of the use of the school building on the occasion of the Christmas celebration for 1908. These Christmas parties came to be a big feature in the program of activities, and, while this first one was held in the School Kindergarten room, in later years the School Assembly Hall was taxed to accommodate the crowds, with figures for attendance running as high as five hundred.

" The Christmas celebration for the children connected with Stearns Neighborhood House was held in the Kindergarten Room of the Stearns School, Wednesday afternoon, Dec. 23, from 2 to 4. A number of guests were present, and Miss Turner was assisted by Miss Puffer, at the piano and the Misses Hardy and Strong for the tree.

The tree was as beautiful as could be desired, and was rightly the center of attraction. Sixty-one children marched in to the music of a stirring march, then grouped themselves for songs which were well rendered and appropriate for the Christmas season.

Mr. Stocking, of Central Church, then told two delight-



ful stories so skillfully, that, despite the fact that the children were sitting in cramped postures on the floor, he held the attention of the entire group.

The marked pleasure and satisfaction with which every child bestowed the present prepared for his mother, showed an appreciation of the real Christmas spirit. It was gratifying to note their pleasure over gifts received was not greater. The entire absence of anything which savored of an institutional spirit, the spontaneity, naturalness and freedom, with politeness, which marked the behavior and enjoyment of the children, was good to behold. "

A significant fact in connection with these early days was the manner in which affiliations and contacts were made with the leaders in social service work in the city of Boston and other suburban communities. Mrs. Wilkins, the recording Secretary of the Association, became a member of the Boston Social Workers' Union and made many helpful associations with those who were the outstanding workers in various Settlement Houses and other organizations. Miss Turner and members of the Board attended sessions of the Conference of Charities and Correction held at various points both far and near. Speakers were asked to address the annual meetings of the Association and other gatherings of the Board Members.

Jan. 26, 1909. " The President introduced Miss Mary Burgess, of Roxbury Neighborhood House, who, in a delightfully informal way told of the work of that Settlement. After speaking of the dangers which abound in forms of work which necessarily create an artificial arrangement, and deal with abnormal social conditions, Miss Burgess traced the development of the large settlement of which she has been the head-worker for over twenty years. Much time was given to explanation of methods in special instances, and the difficulties and problems which constantly confront so well-established a settlement as that which she represents.

It was reassuring to so youthful an organization as this, to learn that certain difficulties which had seemed most disturbing and quite peculiar to ourselves, had made a great deal of trouble this year, even in such a large and well-managed settlement. The absolute frankness with which Miss Burgess "owned up" to failures and discouragements was ample proof of the integrity of every success, reported. "



Apr. 27, 1909. "The speaker, Mr. Hubbard of the Boston S.P.C.C., who took Mr. Carsten's place, because of his absence in attendance at the White House Conference, was next introduced by the President.

After contrasting the old conception of cruelty to children which meant solely physical abuse, with the new, which referred to moral neglect, as well, Mr. Hubbard described the present aim of the S.P.C.C. which is to create new and better conditions in the home, by instructing and supervising more frequently than by breaking up the home. "

That the Day Nursery aspect of the work was changing to a neighborhood social work is indicated by the figures presented at the annual meeting in Jan. 1909. " The number of children enrolled has been reduced from 39, representing 22 families, to 11 children enrolled, representing five families. " With keen perception Mrs. Wilkins saw that there was danger of a group of well-to-do women from the more favored sections of the city smugly carrying on a work that would, on the surface, be remedial but on closer analysis would prove to be catering to conditions which were unwholesome. It was actually found that in a number of cases fathers who were perfectly capable of earning a livelihood for their families were idle at home, while their wives went out by the day with the Nonantum Day Nursery caring for their young children. In certain cases where Members of the Board were deprived of the services of women who had thus used the Nursery, considerable diplomacy and down-right argument were needed to convince them of the true justice of having these mothers at home caring for their own children wherever possible.

By some of the women of the Board, Miss Turner, the first really trained social worker, was thought to be somewhat arbitrary and to use a phrase less elegant, a trifle "hardboiled".



It is related that, on making a call at one of the neighborhood homes, she found the man of the house taking his ease amid conditions which were far from ideal. Upon asking him why he was not at work, he answered that he was unable to get any work at his regular calling. "It seems to me that there is a job right here," was the direct response from Miss Turner, "in cleaning up the house and taking care of the children who are over at our Nursery." "Oh, but that isn't a man's work," was the prompt reply. To that Miss Turner pointedly countered with, "Well, it seems to me that your wife is doing the man's work of earning the family income, and that the least you could do would be to do her work here at home for her."

A schedule of classes and clubs from the May report of that same year gives a picture of the growth of this later and more constructive part of the work.

Clubs and Classes in the winter of 1908 - 1909

1. Miss Cook's Sewing Class - had 23 enrolled, Aggregate 198, Average 8, Membership at close 10, Lessons 24.
2. Miss Breck had six girls in a reading class.
3. Mrs. Young and Mrs. Childs had 2 classes in Housekeeping
4. 

	1st Class	Enrolled	20	2nd Class	15
"	Lessons	25	"	25	
"	Aggregate	208	"	208	
"	Average	8	"	8	
"	Memb. at Close	12	"	9	
5. Miss Blampied has a Club of Boys ( 6 - 8 yrs. ) Enrolled 15, Aggregate 104, Average 7, Lessons 14.
6. Messrs. Birch and Bevan had a Club of Boys ( 12 - 14 yrs. ) Enrolled 23, Aggregate 81, Average 12, Lessons 10.
7. Miss Sherman, Class in Sewing, Enrolled 19, Aggregate 211, Average 8, Lessons 27, Members at Close 9.
8. Miss Cunningham, Club of Boys ( 7 - 8 yrs. ) Enrolled 10, Aggregate 78, Average 5, Lessons 15.
9. Miss Turner had a Millinery Class ( Mothers ) Enrolled 5, Lessons 5.
10. Miss Gunn, Dancing and Deportment, Miss Puffer, Pianist, ( Girls 12 - 14 yrs. ) Enrolled 19, Aggregate 180, Average 8, Lessons 22.



11. Mrs. Allen's Millinery Class (taught by Miss Hill)  
Enrolled 14, Aggregate 70, Average 9, Lessons 8.
12. Miss Talbot and Miss Stearns, A Club of Girls, (7 - 8 yrs.)  
Enrolled 18, Aggregate 313, Average 13, Lessons 25, Membership at Close 14.
13. Miss Boyden and Miss Strong, Club of Girls (7 - 8 yrs.)  
Enrolled 17, Aggregate 219, Average 9, Lessons 25, Membership at Close 9.
14. Mothers' Club, Enrolled 19, Aggregate 131, Average 15, Meetings 9.
15. Miss Breck, Class in Folk-dancing, Girls, Enrolled 18, Aggregate 100, Average 15, Lessons 8.
16. Miss Knowlton's Kindergarten Club, (5 - 7 yrs.) Enrolled 13, Aggregate 58, Average 7, Lessons 7.
17. Cooking Class for Mothers, conducted by Miss Whipple, Enrolled 14, Aggregate 113, Average 9, Lessons 11 and a Closing Dinner.
18. Miss Hopkins Class in Dancing and Deportment, Enrolled 11, Aggregate 99, Average 8, Lessons 17.

Aggregate Attendance of all Clubs and Classes 2416.

In any adequate Playground History of Newton the part played by the Day Nursery for its activities conducted in connection with the Stearns Neighborhood House would fairly receive large credit. In the securing of financial support and in the engaging of trained leadership the Nursery made the beginnings of a strong playground influence for the Nonantum district.

Sept. 28, 1909. " Miss Jackson, ( substitute for Miss Turner during the summer vacation), possessed the true social spirit and gave herself unspareingly to the service of the House. Although new to this work ( she was a kindergartner ), she cared for the Nursery children, managed the House, and took charge of the yard, which became increasingly, a social center.

Before July the Fourth, the yard, with its addition, had been put in fine condition; swings renewed, sand-bed re-filled, teeters mended and croquet and tether-ball, added to our equipment. Word was given out that the Yard would be open afternoons from two until half-past five. During the first week the attendance was from fifteen to twenty. Gradually numbers increased until between fifty and sixty were on the grounds every afternoon, maintaining an average playground attendance, through the months of July and August of forty-seven. "



Oct. 26, 1909. " Miss Turner reported a conference with Miss Hamilton, General Secretary for the Federation of Working Girls' Clubs, with regard to the organization of a Club for the Mill girls of Nonantum. "

Nov. 23, 1909. " In Sept. and Oct. the playground enrollment was 317 with an aggregate attendance of 1725. "

Dec. 22, 1909. " The attendance at the Christmas party at the Stearns School Assembly Hall of those connected with the House was 175 and guests 200. No one could witness the scene, as a spectator without astonishment at the growth of our work, seen here, as never before, when all who have membership in any department of the life of the House were massed together nor could one withhold admiration at the free, spontaneous enjoyment of all these, with no confusion, disorder or roughness. The discipline was most impressive. "

Jan. 26, 1910. " The meeting was addressed by Miss Alice Higgins of the Associated Charities of Boston, whose clear, logical and convincing statement of the opportunities and responsibilities which both invite and challenge the social worker, was an inspiring call to the study and practice of social service. "

Feb. 23, 1910. " Mrs. Sawyer, Chairman of the House Committee, reported a plan for extended supervised Playground work, during the coming summer, through co-operation with the Mothers' Club if the Association could give the Director a home at Stearns Neighborhood House, the Mothers' Club would be having a supervised play on the School grounds while the little children would be using the Yard at the House, under the supervision of our workers. "

Still another innovation in the list of activities carried on appears at this stage of the growth of the work. It has to do with the establishing of a Milk Station at the Stearns Neighborhood House.

April 26, 1910. " The matter of establishing a Milk Station at Stearns Neighborhood House for the four summer months under the supervision of the Milk and Baby Hygiene Association was discussed. If \$320 extra could be raised the directors would favor the proposition. The members of the Reception Committee agreed to see what could be done about the matter. "

" The resignation of the head-worker, Miss Luella Turner, on account of ill health was read. It was voted that the resignation be accepted with proper expression of the great appreciation of the Directors of the efficient and satisfactory work done during her administration. The resignation to take effect June 1st. "



May 24, 1910. " Mrs. Keyes, Chairman for the Committee on establishing a Milk Station, reported favorably as to having made satisfactory arrangements for three months, beginning June 1st. Miss Gallagher, recommended by the Boston Milk and Hygiene Association, engaged to superintend the work. Dr. Philip H. Sylvester of Newton Centre to take charge of the Conferences with Mothers, during July and August. Miss Riddle and the District Nurses will co-operate with Miss Gallagher. "

June 28, 1910. " Miss Gallagher gave a most interesting and thorough report of the opening of the Milk Station and the progress so far made. The preliminary work of visiting Doctors, Hospitals, Schools and the co-operation, especially of the Kindergarten teachers and Miss Hamilton of the District Nursing Association were described. Five babies are now taking milk regularly; 266 calls have been made by Miss Gallagher. "

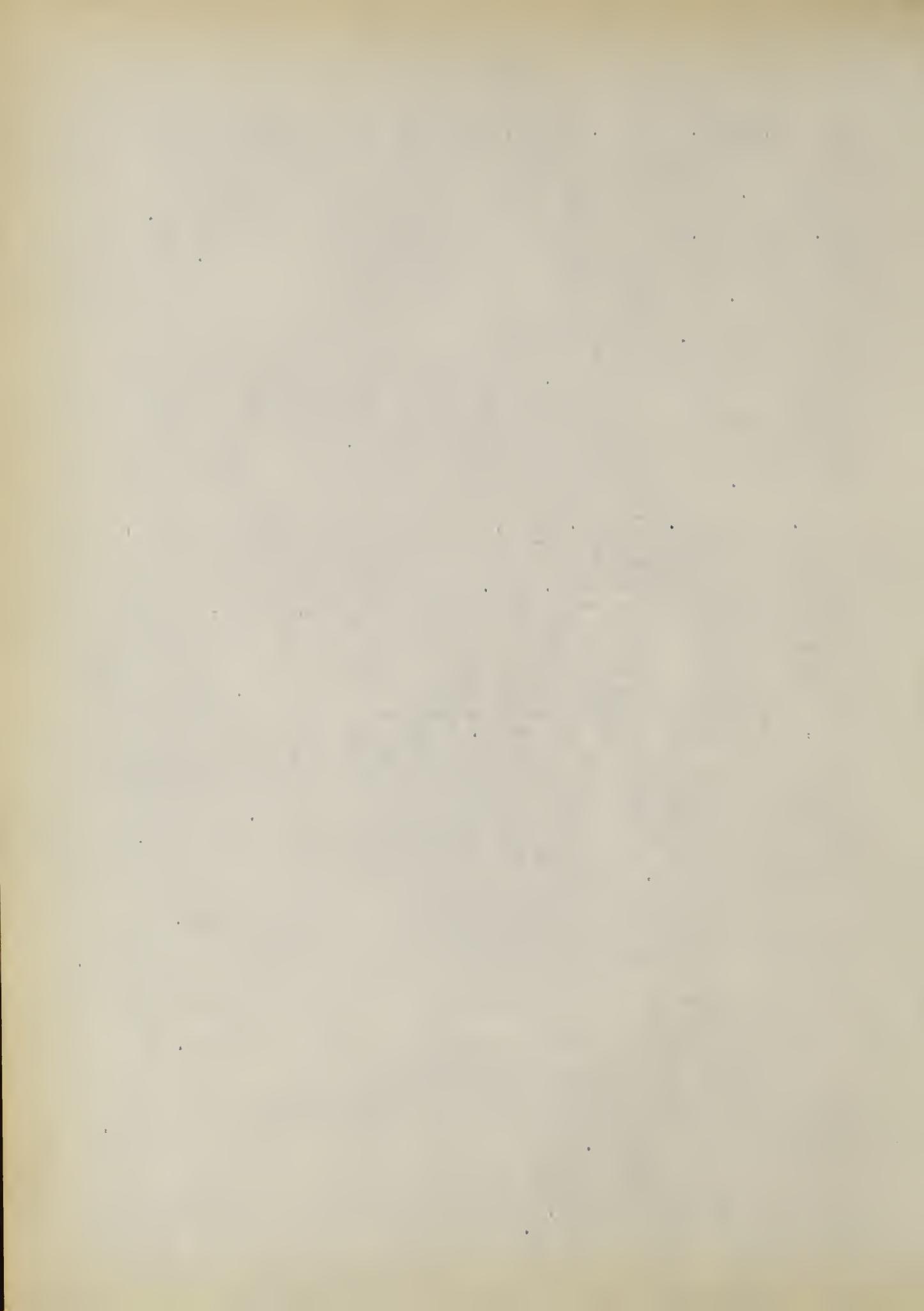
Sept. 27, 1910. " Mrs. Rice, for the Playground Committee, reported co-operation with the Mothers' Club, in meeting the problems of a first year effort at systematic, trained leadership for playground work. Mr. Samuel Nahas, the Director, secured from the Springfield Training School, by Mr. Spaulding ( Superintendent of Schools ) labored under so many difficulties and disadvantages at the start, that not until the middle of the season could he obtain the needful equipment to attract and hold large numbers of children on the grounds. The attendance and behavior improved steadily and at the end of the season, an athletic meet was held. "

" Miss Gallagher followed with a thoroughly prepared and carefully arranged summary of the work of the Modified Milk Station, in all its varied aspects. These reports in typewritten form were presented to each Director, thus ensuring a careful study of the work which has been so well inaugurated. "

With the advent of the Annual Meeting held on Jan. 24, 1911, the Association moved into the fifth year of its history. We note the scope of the work from certain of the outstanding items in the Clerk's most complete and careful records.

" With the teachers of the Stearns School, a party was given in Feb. in the Stearns School Hall for the parents of Pupils and members of Stearns Neighborhood Clubs and Classes. Over 400 were present.

At the close of the season an exhibition of the work of the Clubs and Classes, with a reception and Donation Party, was given by the Directors.



The Mothers' Club also held a most successful party at the House.

The Christmas Party was held at Stearns School Hall and consisted of brief entertainment of music, folk-dancing and carols, a Christmas tree and gifts for 178 children, distributed by Santa Claus.

In co-operation with the Mothers' Club of Newton and the School Board, a Playground Director, Mr. Samuel Nahas, from the Springfield Training School, was secured to supervise the play at the Stearns School Playground from June 20th to Sept. 1st.

Aid and encouragement was given to the Crescent Social Club, organized by Miss Ethel Hobart, Secretary of the Massachusetts Association of Women Workers.

During the months of June, July, August and September, a Milk Station was maintained at Stearns Neighborhood House, under the direction of Miss Gallagher, a trained nurse and a social worker of wide experience.

Preparation and distribution of milk; daily visits in houses where detailed instruction was given in hygiene, sanitary living and infant feeding; an earnest effort made to keep mothers of babies from going out to work, and a persistent, vigorous protest against dirty and unsanitary dwellings were a few of the tasks performed by Miss Gallagher.

There are now, in successful operation, at the House, 21 Classes and Clubs, with an enrollment of 230 members.

There is a demand and need for more evening work; especially a Club for the girls who have been connected with the House but who have gone to work now, and Italian girls and women.

Too much cannot be said, in praise of the volunteer leaders, who combine in such an unusual degree, faithfulness and ability.

The possibility of enlarging the scope of the work has been entirely dependent upon the generous co-operation of Mr. Spaulding and Mr. Winslow, Head-master of the Stearns School, through whom we have had the use of needed rooms in the School building.

On every side of its work, the Association has met with such generous co-operation that the discouragements incident to any uplift work, have been more than counterbalanced by the prevailing helpfulness. "



The Association was operating on a budget of about \$3000. at that time and it went into the new year with a balance on hand of over \$700. These figures give some idea of the generous support in a financial way of the Association's work.

In addition to the change of head-workers of the previous summer, there now came to the Association a change in leadership in the office of President for Mrs. Tolman, who had served since the beginning, relinquished her position in January, 1911.

" Mrs. Keyes voiced the gratitude and appreciation of all, when, in moving a vote of thanks to the retiring President, Mrs. James P. Tolman, she emphasized the great value to the Association of the guidance, through organizing and formative days, of one who so admirably combined, wisdom, courage, tact and discretion. This gracious, dignified and able leadership had been responsible for our best achievement.

Mrs. Tolman, after expressing her gratitude for this expression of our feeling for her and her service to the Association, introduced Mrs. Robert A. Woods, of South End House, Boston, who gave a most interesting and inspiring talk on Neighborliness, and the varied ways in which the spirit of Neighborliness can be expressed, through a social settlement. Combined with a wide outlook on the field of Social Service, she clearly showed the value of the little things, the social amenities and "getting together" spirit, which help to smooth and brighten daily living. "

Officers Elected at Annual Meeting, Jan. 1911.

President	Miss Grace Weston
Vice-President	Mrs. Charles W. Davidson
"	Mrs. F. H. Keyes
Treasurer	Mrs. Rebecca Sherman
Asst.-Treasurer	Mrs. H. W. Trayer

Directors, the above named, and, the following:



1. Mrs. W.H. Allen	26. Mrs. F.E. Jones
2. Mrs. Ralph Angier	27. Mrs. W.E. Jones
3. Mrs. H.H. Ballard, Jr.	28. Mrs. F.H. Keyes
4. Mrs. C.H. Breck	29. Mrs. F.H. Loveland
5. Mrs. A.P. Carter	30. Miss Louise Lovett
6. Mrs. Atherton Clark	31. Mrs. W.H. Lucas
7. Mrs. A.B. Cobb	32. Mrs. C.R. Lynde
8. Mrs. E.W. Converse	33. Mrs. C.D. Meserve
9. Mrs. Frank B. Converse	34. Mrs. Marcus Morton
10. Mrs. W.A. Corson	35. Mrs. C.F. Painter
11. Mrs. Florence Crain	36. Mrs. George R. Pulsifer
12. Mrs. Calvert Crary	37. Mrs. William F. Plant
13. Mrs. Frank A. Day	38. Mrs. F.S. Pratt
14. Mrs. Henry B. Day	39. Mrs. James L. Richards
15. Mrs. Charles W. Davidson	40. Mrs. L.T. Sawyer
16. Miss Miriam Drury	41. Mrs. H.B. Stebbins
17. Mrs. Eben Ellison	42. Mrs. George Schrafft
18. Mrs. F.M. Ferrin	43. Mrs. J.R. Simpson
19. Mrs. Henry C. French	44. Mrs. J.P.R. Sherman
20. Mrs. Charles Gibson	45. Mrs. Elisha Taylor
21. Mrs. C.B. Gleason	46. Mrs. E.E. Wakefield
22. Mrs. E.K. Hall	47. Mrs. James P. Tolman
23. Mrs. Sydney Harwood	48. Mrs. A.R. Weed
24. Mrs. Walter Holbrook	49. Mrs. Charles Whittemore
25. Mrs. E.P. Hurd	50. Mrs. H.D. Lloyd

Comparison with the two earlier lists will show many of the same names of those who had pioneered from the very beginning. Also there are many new names which now appear to bring new and added strength to the work of carrying on the Association. This chapter cannot be brought to an end without one further word regarding the women making up this splendid list. Wives of physicians, merchants, judges, bankers, teachers, manufacturers and other too numerous to mention, they represented much that was finest and best in the city of Newton. While they gave of their money generously, they also gave of their time and their personalities in unstinted measure. The mutual contacts with each other and with those of other circumstances in the Nonantum district were many and stimulating. All honor to the founders! Enthusiasm and



diligence to meet the needs of the day and, what was better still, courage and vision to eagerly reach forward toward that which would most truly serve the community in the future characterized the hearts and minds of those who bore the brunt of the burden in those first absorbing years.



CHAPTER III.

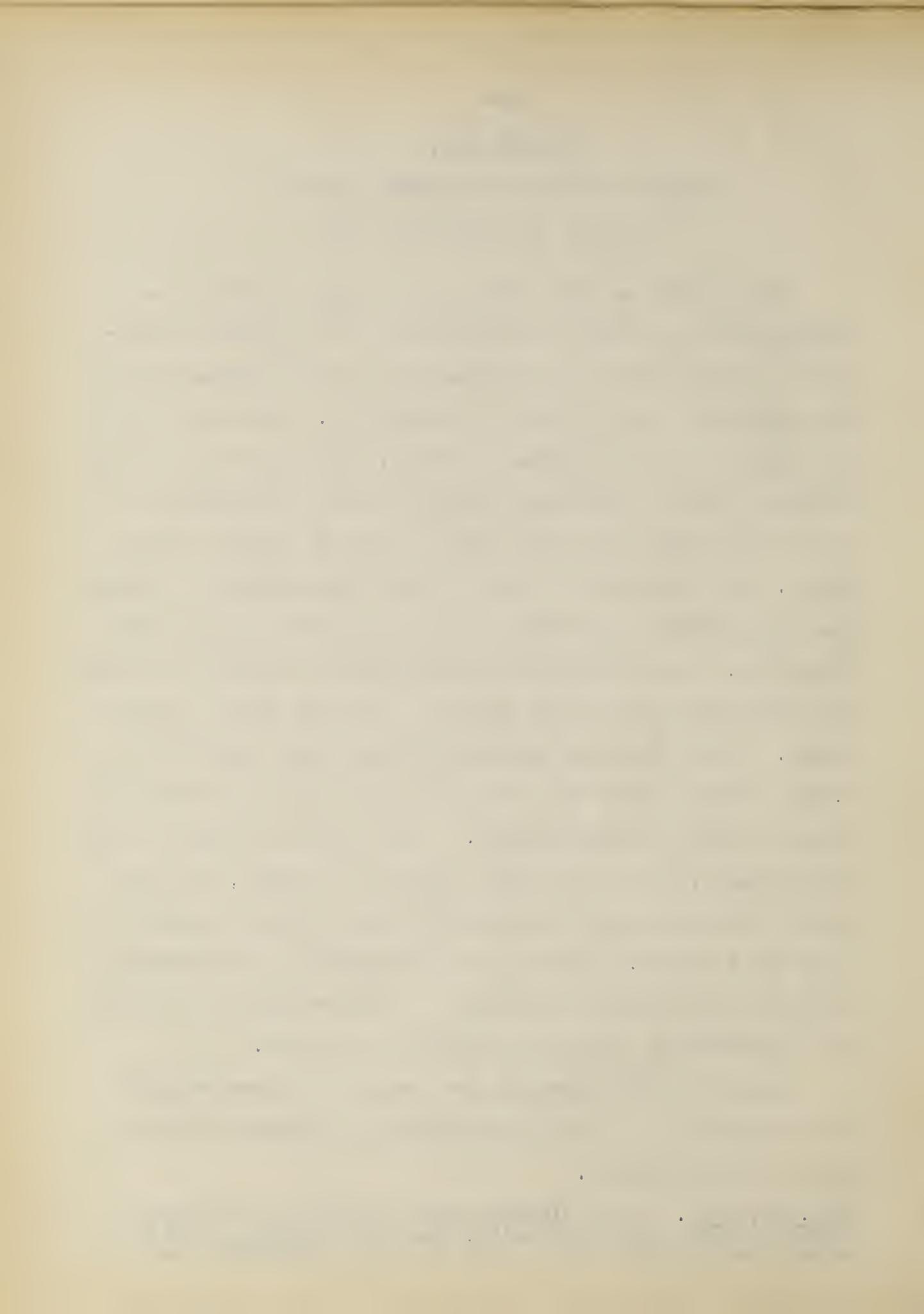
FROM DAY NURSERY TO SCHOOL CENTRE

CHANGES IN PURPOSE AND AIM

The ability to meet change and to adapt itself to new conditions was a sign of the vitality of the pioneer organization, whose next five years were to see the shaping toward the permanent form in which we not know it. The star of the Day Nursery idea was beginning to set, and the new day of the definite school centre was breaking in the consciousness of those whose hands and minds were shaping the course of affairs. The early part of this chapter will attempt to chronicle these changes which were so surely leading in the right direction. The development of programs and activities during the later years will serve to bring the story down to modern times. It is of course impossible to indicate all of the cross-currents which made their pull upon the even course of things within the organization. Time acts as a sieve through which many of the discouraging memories slip away, and that which remains usually had to do with the successes rather than the failures. The heat and the burning of the noonday fade into the coolness and peace of the eventide in the life of a movement as they do in the world of nature!

From the Clerk's records we continue to glean significant happenings which all add interesting glimpses of progress and achievement.

Mch. 28, 1911. " The Directors were privileged in having speak to them, Miss Mary Smith, who is in charge of the work among the Italians which is carried on so extensively at



Dennison House, Boston. Speaking informally and answering many questions, Miss Smith gave a very clear picture of the conditions and difficulties surrounding work among Italian women, especially. She urged that the best in Italian customs and traditions be conserved and every effort made to present the best standards to these eager people who are ready to become Americans but who need to be made good Americans. "

Apr. 25, 1911. " Mrs. Sawyer, Chairman of the House Committee, reported that a Club, composed of Italian Men in the Neighborhood, supervised by men from Central Church, Newtonville, were having social meetings once a month, Tuesday evenings, at the House. Mr. W.H. Allen is President of this Club, which desires to meet here, and is willing to pay any charge for light and service which the Association fixes. "

" The plan for School gardens in the yard is urged by Miss Francis, who feels confident that they can be successfully conducted and will supervise them herself. "

May 23, 1911. " Mrs. Holbrook, Chairman of the Board of Visitors, was unable to be present, but her report was the usual one of irregularity of attendance at the House on the part of Visitors. It was suggested, by Miss Lovett, that the Visitors be informed of the value to the workers at the House, of these regular visits, and by Mrs. Jones, that the old appropriation of \$5.00, to be expended by the Chairman of the Visitors for the month, thus giving something definite for them to do, be restored. "

June 27, 1911. " Mr. E.K. Hall has kindly consented to assume the responsibility of putting through the matter or re-newing the Lease upon the Stearns House, and is at work with the owners.

The Playground Director and Assistant have visited the grounds, and the City Forester has also definitely agreed to have everything in shape, for the opening, July 5th. The Street Commissioner has agreed to clean out the brook, and a sample of the water will be submitted to the State Board of Health for examination.

Plans for the Milk Station are well under way. "

Sept. 26, 1911. " Mrs. Hall reported the failure to secure a lease of the premises under the conditions desired. Voted that the Association take no lease of the property, but use it until better arrangements can be made. "

Oct. 24, 1911. " The Committee also recommended the publication of the Annual Report, to include an account of the work carried on, the expenditure and the list of subscribers; like-



wise the creation of a Publicity Committee whose business it should be to see that the work of the Association be kept before the public, to arouse interest in it and to secure support for it. "

Jan. 23, 1912. " The unqualified success of the Playground, conducted on the Stearns School grounds, during the months of July and August, is the best possible proof of the value of co-operation in Social Service. The grounds were put in condition and equipped for base-ball and basketball; sand-boxes, swings, teeters and a bubble fountain were furnished by the City, under the direction of Mr. Buckman. The Stearns School, through the active interest of the Principal, Mr. Winslow, and the help of the Janitor and Shower-bath Matron gave valuable aid to the work. The Newton Mothers' Club, through their generous gift of money made trained supervision possible. The Playground Committee from Stearns Neighborhood House, administered the work. "

" Miss Rachel Nason, who was secured as Supervisor, has proved herself by training, experience and personality, thoroughly competent. She was assisted by Miss Francis, Head-worker, and Miss Howard, Assistant, whenever their duties at the Neighborhood House permitted. During the term of the Summer School Miss Shephardson assisted during the morning session. In August, Mr. Robert Barry, a former N.H.S. athlete, took charge of baseball and track work, afternoons. Since the grounds are without enclosure, it was impossible to keep a record of attendance. Estimating from counts taken at various times, the smallest attendance at anytime was sixty with the largest number between three and four hundred. "

" The Association is greatly indebted to the Superintendent of Schools, and Mr. Winslow, Head-Master of the Stearns School, for many benefits and for unfailing spirit of co-operation. Without this, and the efficient corps of Volunteers, the value of whose services can not be estimated, the work could not have been carried on. To the many generous givers of money, supplies, services, time and strength and encouragement, the Association extends sincere thanks. "

" The President introduced the speaker of the afternoon, Mrs. Eva W. White, Head-resident at Elizabeth Peabody House, who traced the beginning and development of a social settlement through the description of the growth of Elizabeth Peabody House. Starting as a Kindergarten, from the little group of children thus habitually coming to the House, there grew the larger circles - playmates, older brothers and sisters, parents, neighbors, until the thickly populated West End section which the House serves, is brought into close contact with the House. Mrs. White cited many instances in which the direct and indirect service of the workers at the House, had made immeasurable difference in the



lives of the young people who frequent the House. She described the plans being made for a new and adequate House and the possibilities for growth in many directions. Mrs. White answered many questions, and proved most helpful as well as interesting in that part of her talk. "

An attempt to find out definitely the field and need for the Day Nursery work was made at this time as the following bill indicate.

Feb. 27, 1912. " The Case Committee presented a report of recent investigation into the Day Nursery needs of the Neighborhood. An attempt was made to obtain, through the office of the Associated Charities, the Overseers of the Poor, and the Schools, a list of the women, either widows or deserted wives, who might stand in need of the Day Nursery department. These lists were carefully investigated by Miss Francis, and the actual condition in each case reported by her. Aside from those now using the Day Nursery Department, it was found that in nearly every instance there was someone in the family - older children or relatives who could and did look after the small children. A letter from Mrs. Martin, of the Associated Charity, was read in which she expressed great surprise that there were so few who really needed to use the Day Nursery. "

Of historical interest in the progress of social welfare legislation in the State of Massachusetts is the item:

Feb. 27, 1912. " A request from the Boston Social Union for the endorsement of certain bills before the Legislative Committees, was presented. Voted that the Clerk signify to the proper Representatives and Senators, the endorsement of these measures by this Board.

Bills on	Construction of Tenement Houses
	Uniform Child Labor Laws
	Liquor Bill
	Minimum Wage Report
	School Physicians
	School Appropriations

May 28, 1912. " The resignation of Miss Howard, Assistant to the Head-worker, was presented by the Clerk. Miss Howard's stay with us has been so long, and she has been so thoroughly identified with the work, that great regret was expressed at her departure. The Clerk was instructed to convey to her the regret and the warm appreciation of the Association of the interest she has taken in the work. "

The local investigation as to the number in the community



of Nonantum that needed the services of a Day Nursery as reported during the previous February was followed by careful inquiry as to what other similar Nursery Associations in neighboring cities were doing in this matter of meeting new conditions. The next excerpt tells of the experience of the Association in Somerville, Mass.

Nov. 26, 1912. " Mrs. Arthur R. Robertson, President of the Somerville Day Nursery Association, reported upon the work which that Association is doing under changed conditions. Mrs. Robertson spoke of the organization of their Association in 1892, and the maintenance of a Nursery under regular Day Nursery methods until May, 1911.

A crisis in the management of the Nursery, brought about by the illness and consequent resignation of the matron, brought to a focus the subject for some time held under thoughtful consideration by those most directly responsible for the management of the Nursery. After studying the families using the Nursery ( which numbered fifteen, all of which were also Associated Charities families ) it was found that but four or five families were legitimate Day Nursery cases. It was believed that most of the mothers should be in their homes with their children, and the fathers held more strictly responsible for the support of the family. While it was believed that the work was being done as economically as possible, it was also believed that too much money was expended for the amount of good accomplished.

Convinced that a broader, more thorough and constructive work could be accomplished by other means, accordingly, the Day Nursery, as a place, was given up. A trained Social Worker was secured who acted as a Visitor to Day Nursery families and, with visiting from the Directors, careful and helpful supervision followed.

In co-operation with the Associated Charities, plans were made for each family, and aid given to secure the carrying out of these plans. Far closer touch with the families was thus secured, and better results have so far been obtained. Not having the expense of the Nursery plant to maintain, aid could be given in cases where it was required, and mothers kept with their children, to the distinct advantage of both. When it was found that the homes were not fit to have the care of the children, such homes were broken up. Much has been done, by the watchful care of the trained Visitor in building up family conditions, securing from various sources the aid and co-operation required. Families not requiring aid were gradually dropped



from the list, while in the cases where aid was really required, more thorough work than the care of the children for the day has been accomplished, for constructive plans, including the health, welfare and future good of the whole family, have been put in action. Already other Nurseries are investigating the work done in Somerville with a view of following their plan. "

Dec. 17, 1912. " In view of the interest which had been aroused by Mrs. Robertson's report of the changed methods employed by the Somerville Day Nursery Association, it was voted that a Committee be appointed to investigate their work and that of the other Nurseries nearby, looking to the introduction of a similar plan in the work of this Association, said Committee to report at the Annual Meeting in January. "

Annual Meeting

Jan. 27, 1913. " Early in the year, a City Ordinance was passed creating a Playground Commission and appropriating funds for the maintenance of Supervision on all playgrounds of the City. The part which this Association has taken for the past two years, in combining and administering the various resources available for the development of Supervised play on the Stearns School ground, was no longer needful. Through the generous gift of the Mothers' Club, Miss Nason had been re-engaged for the summer, and Mr. Barry tentatively pledged for the work. With the approval of the Mothers' Club, both the funds which they had pledged, and the workers, were turned over to the Playground Commission, and the Stearns School ground came under the direction of Mr. Hermann, Supervisor of the City's Playgrounds. This is a most significant and important forward step. Convincing of the importance of continuous effort in the Nonantum district, Mr. Hermann, has arranged for supervised in-door as well as out-door play for the year round, so that on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons and Saturdays, Mr. Lane directs the play-activities of the boys, and Mrs. Boller, those of the girls. That the importance of a piece of work which this Association inaugurated, has been recognized, and provision made for it, by the City, is cause for great satisfaction. "

" The rapid increase, both in the number and size of the Clubs and Classes conducted by the able corps of volunteers which the Association has been so fortunate as to secure, has necessitated the transfer of nearly all these to the Hall, Kindergarten and Class-rooms of the Stearns School. That during the winter, Clubs and Classes under the direction of Stearns Neighborhood House; Playground activities of various kinds; a Public Library Branch and Reading Room, and Public Baths are amicably housed, as well as aided and encouraged by the Head-master of the Stearns School ( Mr. Winslow ), constitutes in it-



self a remarkable tribute to his Social Spirit. To be privileged to work in close co-operation with this School, which, by Mr. Winslow's insight and ability is rapidly becoming a social centre, gives this Association an opportunity for Civic usefulness rarely accorded to an organization working along the necessarily limited lines of private associations. The hearty commendation of the work from Mr. Winslow which our faithful and capable volunteer workers have been doing in their various Classes and Clubs during the past year, coupled with earnest efforts on his part to secure further co-operation in the work of this Season, testifies in a substantial manner to his estimate of the value of the work accomplished. "

" The number of applications has steadily decreased as it has become thoroughly known that no children will be admitted from homes where arrangements can possibly be made for the mother to remain in the home caring for her own children. "

" Early in the year an effort was made to ascertain how many possible Day Nursery Cases might be found in the Neighborhood. Aided by the Overseer of the Poor, Mr. Lowe; by Mrs. Martin of the Associated Charities and teachers, a careful investigation was made. In many instances relatives and older children were helping; in others, with some aid and homework, the mother could remain in the home with her children. The larger problem of unemployment, of neglectful and deserting fathers, will never be solved by Day Nursery aid, which attempts the feat, both socially and economically impossible, of making the mother both bread-winner and home-maker. "

At this same Annual Meeting, a very complete and ample discussion of the matter of giving up the Day Nursery was followed by a report of the Special Committee to study the matter.

Jan. 27, 1913. " Following the election of officers, Mrs. Arthur Robertson, President of the Somerville Day Nursery Association, presented the method of work adopted there more than a year ago, by means of which, the Day Nursery as an institution had been abandoned, and the work done in the homes. She was followed by the Social worker employed by them, Mrs. Jones, who explained in detail the work of that Association, dwelt upon the close affiliation with the Schools, the constant visiting in homes, where, after careful investigation and with strict supervision, aid was more effectively and economically given than formerly, when children were cared for in the Day Nursery.



Jan. 27, 1913. " Mrs. Goss, President of the Lynn Day Nursery Association, followed, presenting, in effective manner the plan of their Association, to follow practically the line of the Somerville Association, believing that a larger, more permanent and essential work could thereby be accomplished. "

" Miss Caldwell, Investigator of the Day Nurseries supported by Mrs. Quincy Shaw, in Boston and Cambridge, followed with a carefully prepared and convincing paper on the essentially temporary character of the Day Nursery method of helping children and mothers; the decline in the Day Nursery attendance, as investigation became more thorough and intelligent, and of the advancing sentiment, re-enforced by legislation, that would keep the mother in the home while her children are small. "

" Following these interesting and thought-provoking talks, the report of the Special Committee, appointed to look into this matter from the standpoint of the experiences of other Nurseries and our own as well, reported through the Chairman, Mrs. A.P. Carter, as follows:

" It has been felt for sometime, by those who are in close touch with the Neighborhood work at Nonantum, that the yearly expenditure, for current expenses alone, is large in proportion to the work accomplished. The rent for our Neighborhood House, always in need of repair, is very large, but for want of a better place for our Classes we have made no change. Our classes now have increased so rapidly in size, that, through the hearty co-operation of Dr. Spaulding and Mr. Winslow, we have moved for the large majority of class work, to the spacious rooms of the Stearns School. We realize now, that nearly one-half of our yearly expenditure has gone to the maintenance of a house where practically no neighborhood work is now done. This situation calls for consideration at least. Interviews with Dr. Spaulding and Mr. Winslow, Head-master of the Stearns School, assure use of continued co-operation. Your Committee suggests the following change of plan in our work. "

" That we no longer maintain our House; that we continue to have our Classes meet in the Stearns School, and that we secure a Social Worker, who will live in the vicinity of Nonantum and, through permission already obtained, will have an office in the Stearns School. Our only expense there would be for extra janitor service and the rental of our own telephone. Let us consider what the effect of this change would be in the neighborhood itself. The growing tendency of all social work is away from that which savors of institutionalism, going back, instead, into the homes. Evidences of this are seen in many legislative



changes that have taken place in the last year, and in the decrease in size of our Day Nurseries. "

" In our particular neighborhood, there are many who do not care to be regarded as objects of charity. By the doing away of a Neighborhood House, a form of institutionalism, the stigma of charity is, in part, at least, removed. Our worker would instead, have more time for visiting in the homes, coming more directly in contact with the needs of those homes, and giving needed help and sympathy in a more intimate and possibly a more friendly way. Another important effect, which the Committee feels this change would have upon the neighborhood, and upon all concerned, would be the arousing of a feeling of co-operation with all. Here we already have a splendid School Centre. We have also, active and expert playground work carried on at the School. These two active forces, united with a third active force as our work has proved to be, would be a power for great good. And from this desire of those living in Nonantum to co-operate in all that we are trying to do, would grow that still more important desire - the desire to be responsible, each for the other. "

" Institutional charity is one way of teachint the poorer classes to shift responsibility. The poor woman in Nonantum, in many cases, would prefer to put her child in the Day Nursery, and go out to work. The poor mother, with a tiny baby, may prefer to wean her baby, put that baby into a Day Nursery and go out by the day, thus shifting the responsibility, and endangering, perhaps, the life of her baby. If there is no longer a Day Nursery, and the Settlement work is carried back into the homes, the family feeling of responsibility, one to the other, is bound to grow. In some cases the assuming of more responsibility may mean some sacrifice on the part of parent and children, but mutual sacrifice is a good thing, and should be the means of bringing about happier family relations. The number of desertions should decrease, if the husband and father can be taught to feel more thoroughly his responsibility toward the home. "

" We now have, at the Neighborhood House, a number of School children, who are having dinner there each day, and spending the remaining hours of the day out of school there. But we know of no child there, now, who could not be taken care of in some other way, or by some relative who ought to feel a responsibility for that child. The appeal of the little child is strong, and it is doubtless hard to reconcile the abandoning of a Day Nursery, with the carrying on of any Settlement work. But certainly the broader ide of building up the home life is a more ideal one, and ought, in the end, to make for stronger character and more efficient citizenship. In Nonantum, at least, your Committee feels that



under the new system, if tried, each case already cared for, will still be cared for, in just as wise, if not a wider way, and that with the money now spent, merely for the current expenses of our House, aid might wisely be given to individual families. "

Feb. 25, 1913. " The consideration of the report of the Special Committee formed in December, to consider a change in method of work, was then taken up. Mrs. Carter, Chairman of that Committee, read again the report, presented at the Annual Meeting. A general discussion of the proposal to give up the present inadequate, out-of-repair and expensive-to-maintain quarters, in favor of the experiment of doing all the Club and Class work at the School building, as well as maintaining office headquarters there, and the work for children in the home followed. An attempt was made to present the advantages and disadvantages of both methods. "

" After considerable discussion, it was moved that this Board recommend to the Association, the adoption of the plan presented by the Special Committee, as an experiment, the Association being committed temporarily, only, by such adoption of said plan. Voted, also, that a Special Meeting of the Association be called to act upon this recommendation, such meeting to be held immediately preceding the regular Board Meeting on March 25th. "

At this Special Meeting, held in March 1913, a letter was read from Mr. Winslow which might well be compared to his Credo as recorded in Chapter I, which, however, it preceded chronologically by about three years. The copy of this letter is preserved through the Clerk's records.

" Letter from Mr. Winslow, Head-master of the Stearns School, read at the Meeting of March 25, 1913.

' Highly as I value the work of the Playground Commission, I feel strongly that what our children need most is the formation of good work habits. In forming these, the Neighborhood House has helped me greatly, through the Industrial Classes which have been conducted. Furthermore, the moral tone of the children has been improved by their Association with the high-type helpers furnished by the Association as leaders of these Classes. Having head-quarters at the School, would encourage many who have not joined these previously, because it seemed like accepting charity to come in. The conduct of Classes would be made much easier, having the influence and authority of the School back of them.



The economy of this plan must appeal to all and would seem to warrant paying sufficient salary to secure a worker of the very highest type. A woman of fine character and strong personality, on consultation with the teachers and principal of our School, could find out the needs of our district and bring relief as no other agency ever could. A Simmons graduate, perhaps, who knew something of cooking, sewing and millinery, could look into the various hard luck cases we hear of so often; in one case, advise the Overseer of the Poor, in another the Truant Officer, in another the various church organizations which furnish second hand clothing, and more important still - she could help the incompetent mother in planning for better conditions, cutting and making over clothing and hats; making palatable dishes, etc.

If it seemed desirable, our cooking room could be used for serving lunches at a low cost to those who now go without - or are poorly fed. I think it could be planned that very needy children could earn sufficient, in the sewing, crocheting or other industrial Classes, to provide themselves a simple lunch, for each School day, at least. I believe occasional meetings could be held by the Directors which the School Teachers and those workers furnished by the Association could attend and many matters of common interest could be discussed. This work does not need to conflict in the least with that of the School Nurse, the Playground Director, or any other work now being carried on. "

March 25, 1913. " The President stated that the meeting had been called to consider the advisability of adopting the plan recommended by the Directors to change the work we had been carrying on, which included some Day Nursery Work to that of Settlement Work, only. The report of the Special Committee was again presented by Mrs. Carter, also a letter from Mr. Winslow, in which he stated his appreciation of our work and gave suggestions for a work which would keep us more closely in touch with the homes of those for whom we work. The question was asked, ' Does any difficulty stand in the way of our giving up the House and adopting the plan? ' The By-Laws of the Association were read, proving that we had the right. "

" It was voted that the recommendation of the Special Committee be adopted. "

The natural caution and hesitation of the Board to completely sever the ties that held them to the Day Nursery and the Neighborhood House are to be noted in the next action to be recorded.



April 22, 1913. " The first item of business was the presentation for action, of the report of the Special Committee recommending that the House be given up and the work be temporarily conducted from the Stearns School Building. It was voted, that the Stearns Neighborhood House be given up June 1st, and, the offer of office room at Stearns School be accepted. "

The records do not make mention of the resignation of Mrs. Wilkins as Clerk until the October meeting, but the fact that the serious illness of her husband made it necessary for her to give up her devoted service for the Association is indicated by the fact that from this point on the records are in the handwriting of various others. And it was at the May meeting that the resignation of Miss Weston, the second President, was accepted with regret. These founders and pioneers had done their work well, and other strong leaders were at hand to take up and carry on the work.

With the shift from the Stearns Neighborhood House during the summer of 1913 to quarters in the Stearns School, there came a change in the title given the worker in charge. Miss Cornelia Taylor had the distinction of being the first one to carry on the new type of work, as conducted within and from the Stearns School. Instead of Head-worker, it was thought best to call her the School Matron. We first find mention of her in the records as follows.

Sept. 23, 1913. " Miss Taylor then reported that she had made 50 calls since the morning of Sept. 8th, when she first took the position. With the exception of the few cases connected with the former work of the Nursery, these calls have been made upon the pupils of the Stearns School, and at the request of Mr. Winslow, who is in close touch with the work. "



Oct. 22, 1913. " Mr. Winslow gave an interesting talk, on conditions of the people among whom we work. It ( Nonantum ) is to Newton what the East Side is to New York and there are ten different nationalities represented. Visitors from all over the country come to see our work and the teaching of these foreigners is of great importance. Mr. Winslow expressed much pleasure in the prospect of our co-operation and also an appreciation of the work already done by Miss Taylor. "

The thrill of settling the office at the Stearns School was not as great as it had been in fitting out the Stearns Neighborhood House. But the shift was made and satisfactorily, too, under the direction of Miss Taylor. The work increased to the point where very soon there was talk of the need of an assistant to help her with part of the work. A Miss Dolber was very soon appointed to the position of Visiting Housekeeper, a position which she was deemed capable of filling, due to her success as a cooking teacher for sometime previous. This was in April, 1914. During the summer, Miss Taylor was engaged in taking the School census for the Nonantum district. An employment bureau was started on a small scale and the plan of furnishing inexpensive school lunches was being carried out successfully.

In the meantime, the anomalous situation of the School Centre work being carried on under the old Day Nursery name became a matter for consideration.

Jan. 26, 1915. " The next business was discussion on changing the name of the Association. It was stated that the fact that we existed under the name of a Day Nursery while not doing that kind of work implied made a false impression on people. It would be better to have a name that speaks the purpose of the work actually carried on. It was voted to change the name and that the matter be referred to the February meeting of the Board of Directors. "



The close co-operation with the special work of the Stearns School as related in Chapter I. was to be noted at this time.

June 22, 1915. " A Special meeting of the Nonantum Day Nursery Association was held June 22, 1915, at the home of the Clerk to discuss and vote on the appropriation of \$600.00 towards the work of an industrial department in the Stearns School. After a very clear and interesting statement by Miss Taylor as to the importance of such work, Mrs. Ferrin, Chairman of the Finance Committee, gave an equally clear statement of the condition of the Treasury. It was voted to appropriate the sum of \$600.00 towards such a work as an experiment for one year. "

The matter of getting the legal number of two-thirds of the qualified voters to pass upon the change of the name dragged a bit and it was not until Feb. 1916, that the matter was finally and irrevocably passed.

Feb. 16, 1916. " The adjourned meeting of the Nonantum Day Nursery Association was held at the home of Mrs. F.M. Ferrin, 35 Hunnewell Ave., Newton, at 3:30 P.M. "

" Miss Lovett, Chairman of the Committee on the change of name, reported that 290 ballots had been received which number was more than enough to make two-thirds of the number of members. Thirty-seven of the Directors were present and the majority signed, in the presence of a notary public, the document drawn up for the purpose of changing the name from 'The Nonantum Day Nursery Association' to the 'Stearns School Centre'. It was thereupon declared by the chair that the vote to change the name had been carried by a two-thirds vote of all members, and on motion duly made and seconded, the ballot was closed. "

Such however was the force of habit that the record for the March meeting shows that the Clerk nearly failed of getting the new name down correctly.

March 21, 1916. " The regular monthly meeting of the ( Nonantum ) Stearns School Centre was held on Tuesday, etc. "

Thus was the tenth year of the work completed with the spring of 1916. While a decade is not enough for an



individual to "grow up", yet in that time, under the able, wise and looking-toward-the future leadership of the founders and the newly recruited Directors, the Day Nursery had grown through its adolescent period to the maturity as we now know it. The many and frequent references to the encouragement given by Mr. Winslow of the Stearns School testify as to his vision and practical sagacity in the development of this different and unusual social work. It was indeed a co-operative work, for the record, even as fully as we have tried to give it, can only suggest the complete story. The need was there, and it was to the credit of those within and without the School and the women of the Board of Directors that such determined efforts were made to meet it.



## CHAPTER IV.

### THE MIDDLE AND LATER YEARS - WORKERS, PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

The spring of 1916 saw the Stearns School Centre completing the third full year of activities carried on within and from the Stearns School Building. Miss Taylor, known as the School Matron, was in the midst of the longest term of service rendered by any of the social workers in the entire history of the work in Nonantum. The hopes which had been expressed at the time of the giving up of the Stearns Neighborhood House as to the growth of the work had been largely realized. There were constant efforts to find new ways of serving the community as well as the strengthening of the older features of the work. The stigma of "charity" had been almost completely removed by the fusing of the work with the school life and the use of the school rooms and equipment. The Industrial work, as developed under the leadership of Mr. Winslow, was at its zenith. Home visitation by the matron was regularly carried on, with the result of better adjustment of children in their school work.

Two of the most important and helpful features of the Stearns School Centre program were the Mothers' Club and the Girls' Club. Volunteer leaders for the Mothers' Club numbered such of the faithful and interested directors as Mrs. G.W. Auryansen, Mrs. C.W. Davidson and Mrs. Wallace Boyden. Miss Louise Lovett was the devoted and friendly



sponsor for the Girls' Club. Contacts were being formed at Club meetings which were often held in the homes of these volunteers who thus shared their material gifts along with their personal and social gifts.

The Stearns School Centre was now an active member of the Boston Social Union, where reports of the Nonantum work were received with much enthusiasm and interest. Nearer at home the aid of the Centre was enlisted, along with other organizations, in an effort towards securing better "movies" at the Newton Opera House, the one and only picture place in the city.

Something of the community and the need for social work is indicated in the following statement which was prepared by Miss Taylor at this time.

SUGGESTED OUTLINE OF WORK  
for  
STEARNS SCHOOL CENTRE ASSOCIATION IN NONANTUM.

I. FACTS WHICH INDICATE THE SCOPE OF WORK.

1. A population of approximately 5600, made up of 14 nationalities.
2. A large group of Italians, as indicated by there being about 220 Italian boys and girls in school, with generally low standards of living.
3. About 100 babies born each year.
4. Over 75 families, represented in school, in which there is no father.
5. Over 21 families, represented in school, in which there is no mother.
6. About 320 girls under 25 in the Saxony and Good Shepherd Mills alone.



7. 22 feeble-minded boys and girls who attend the Barnard School in West Newton and others who do not attend school.

8. About 250 children in school who are at least 10% underweight.

## II. SUGGESTIONS FOR CARRYING ON THE WORK.

1. There should be a Director to supervise all the work, to further develop lines of work now carried on, to organize new work to meet needs not already provided for and those which may arise, and to co-operate closely with all other agencies at work in the district.

2. There should be a full-time Assistant, engaged for 12 months, with home economics training and some training in social work, to assist the Director in whatever ways the Director deems advisable.

3. Volunteer workers should be used in the parts of the work where they could do their most efficient work, these volunteers to be secured through the efforts of the Board of Directors and the Director.

4. The Director, in co-operation with other agencies, should remedy conditions indicated in the following cases, which are typical and which occur every day:-

(a) A young woman with three children under school age, husband, irresponsible type, employed in Navy, sends her \$52.00 a month, or \$12.00 a week. Minimum cost of food for the family, \$11.20 a week. This needs financial adjustment with co-operating agencies.

(b) Boy in Fourth Grade complains at home of soreness in region of hip bone -- taken to Doctor who prescribes outside application; later, no improvement, recommends taking to Hospital. X-ray taken, plaster case advised, report should be treated as tuberculosis. Hospital promised to notify mother when he could be admitted; no word from the Hospital, so Doctor recommends second hospital. Mother working and visit delayed for months, with report from boy of increasing lameness.

(c) Feeble-minded girl of 11 discharged from the Barnard School because too much of a disturbing element among other children -- no recommendation to mother of further action concerning child -- mother unable to cope with situation without someone to arrange a conference between the teachers and the mother.



### III. POLICIES.

1. There should be an Executive Committee of not more than five members which should meet with the Director once a month, the week preceding the Directors' Meeting. Suggestions for changes or for new lines of work should be presented either to members of this Committee or to the Director. Recommendations for action upon these should be referred to the Board of Directors.

2. The Director and the chairman of each standing committee should be responsible to the Board for the work placed under their supervision by the Board of Directors. Any suggestions made should be referred to the Director and chairman of committee under whose supervision that line of work is being carried on.

3. There should be a monthly conference of the Chairman of the Executive Committee, the Principal of Stearns School and the Director, to exchange suggestions concerning the development of the work.

4. At each monthly Directors' Meeting there should be, in addition to the reports, a speaker who would present the "last word" along constructive lines in which the Association is interested. Each month a copy of the Director's report should be sent to all members of the Board of Directors not present at the meeting, in order that the entire Board may act as a Publicity Committee to help in furthering the knowledge of and interest in the work.

A survey of the Clerk's records discloses many interesting sidelights on the carrying on of the work and of the workers themselves.

April 18, 1916. " A letter was read from Miss Dorothy Stockin applying for the position as assistant worker for next year. Voted to appoint Miss Stockin.

Nov. 17, 1916. " Miss Taylor said in her report that she had made 75 calls during the month. She urged the members of this Association to attend the sessions of the Juvenile Court on Saturday mornings. It is poorly managed and a committee, of which she is a member, is trying to arouse the interest of the public regarding it. "

" A branch of the West Newton Music School is soon to be opened at the Stearns School. "

Dec. 19, 1916. " During the past month Miss Stockin has



been able to provide the school lunches with no extra expense to the Association - the amount paid by the children covering the total cost. "

" Miss Swift, who has recently begun work among the Italians, is proving exceptionally valuable. Her thorough knowledge of the Italian people and the Italian language enable her to do a work that is better than any we have had done previously for those people. "

The Annual Meetings usually meant the coming of some noted worker from some other suburb or from Boston itself. A second visit from Mrs. Eva W. White is noted in 1917.

Jan. 39, 1917. " The President then introduced Mrs. Eva Whiting White, Director of the Boston School Centres, who gave a short but most informing talk on the value of the school centre work and of the great constructive work for the nation being done in them. Mrs. White congratulated the Stearns School Centre for being among the pioneers, as up to the present only 131 communities in the country have developed the school centre idea. "

The first of several references to the matter of establishing a Baby Clinic appear at this time.

June 19, 1917. " There was some discussion as to the project of starting a Baby Clinic in the fall, with a general feeling that it was the next thing for the Board to undertake. "

Sept. 18, 1917. " The President then explained that, owing to the sudden and unexpected resignation of Miss Taylor, it had been necessary to act quickly to fill her place, before the beginning of the school year, and upon consultation with several of the Directors, the President had offered the position provisionally to Miss Stockin, the cooking teacher of last year, who was endorsed by Mr. Winslow and knew the work needed to be done. After some discussion the Board approved the President's action and appointed Miss Stockin. Miss Swift, of Lincoln House, is also to give some time for general visiting among the Italians. "

" Mrs. Green reports the programs planned for the monthly meetings of the Mother's Club-



November	- Harvest Party
December	- Christmas Party
January	- Men's Night
February	- Patriotic Meeting
March	- Homes
April	- Sports
May	- Music
June	- Picnic

Nov. 17, 1917. " Miss Stockin reported the request for a Baby Clinic in co-operation with the Welfare Bureau and organizations in Boston. There was considerable discussion but no vote was taken until more information could be obtained by the Directors. "

Dec. 18, 1917. " Mrs. Charles Cooke, President of the West Newton Mothers' Club, was then introduced. She came as chairman of an all-Newton Committee, appointed by the State Board of Hygiene, to undertake work in this city for child conservation and the establishment of Baby Clinics. Mrs. Cooke described the clinic successfully conducted in West Newton since July, and urged the establishment of a similar one in Nonantum. After some questions were asked of Mrs. Cooke as to meetings and expenses, it was voted to ask Dr. Irving Fisher of West Newton to address the Annual Meeting in regard to Baby Clinics as a means of bringing this important matter before the subscribers to Stearns School Centre work. "

Feb. 19, 1918. " The success of the Baby Clinic for the first three weeks was reported. Thirty-two babies were brought on the opening day, 14 on the second day, and 5 on the third day. The mothers showed much appreciation. "

April 16, 1918. " Mrs. Davidson spoke of the coming government census of all children under five years. A publicity campaign must be carried on by the workers and from May 1st to May 15th the children must be brought to the school every afternoon between 2 and 5 for registration of weight, height and other details. Four workers at a time will be needed and volunteers were called for. This is government work and must be done. "

May 21, 1918. " Mrs. Bridges mentioned the record of the Stearns School Centre in weighing, measuring and recording 650 babies in two weeks for the Campaign of the Children's Bureau, and also the large number vaccinated at the clinics. "

Sept. 17, 1918. " Miss Stockin reported on the matter of forming a group of Girl Scouts. Miss Lovett said that Miss Freeman of West Newton would be glad to help start such a Club. "



Nov. 19, 1918. " A brief report was made by Miss Stockin of the work done in Nonantum during the "flu" epidemic, by herself as School Matron, the Board of Health and the Canteen Committee, improving Sanitary conditions, feeding the sick and the well, caring for laundry, etc. About 30 families a day were fed at cost price. "

Dec. 17, 1918. " The President read the resignation of Miss Stockin, as Head-worker to take effect at once as she wished to take another position. After some discussion, the resignation was accepted. In the opinion of the Board it was decided that a larger salary must be offered to get and hold an experienced worker. "

This interesting item from the Clerk's Annual Report reviews what has been accomplished at the Baby Clinic.

Jan. 21, 1919. " We have made one new departure this year in the establishment of a Baby Clinic in conjunction with other similar activities throughout the city. Our work which started as a Day Nursery with the babies, extended itself through the school children, the young girls, the older women and now completes the cycle by returning again to the babies, in this effort of the Clinic to help keep babies well. "

" There being no further business the President introduced the speaker of the afternoon, Mr. Albert Kennedy of the South End House, who spoke on the relation and interrelation of the organized community and family life. The maintenance of the institution of the home, he considered the most important duty of all social work. American education must be a partnership between home and school. "

Feb. 19, 1919. " Mrs. Davidson then reported the results of the search for a new head-worker, culminating in the selection of Miss Annie L. Weeks of Newtonville. She has had experience in Rochester, Washington, with the Public Safety Committee and the Welfare Bureau of Newton. She is already familiar with the situation in Nonantum and is preparing herself for the work. It was voted to appoint Miss Weeks to begin work March 1st. "

March 18, 1919. " The resignation of Mrs. Bridges, as president, was read. "

June 16, 1919. " Miss Lovett reported a change in that the City, through the School Department, has taken over the cooking courses and is to pay for 1/3 of Miss Logue's salary. "



It is at this time that we find a weekly schedule of the activities of the Stearns School Centre printed on a card.

W E E K L Y      S C H E D U L E

Stearns School Centre,  
Jasset Street, Newton, Mass.

MONDAY	-	10:00 - 10:20	Mid Morning Lunch
		1:15 - 1:30	Banking Hours
		3:30 - 4:30	Health Class
		7:00 - 8:30	Girl Scouts
		7:30 - 9:30	Mothers' Club (every other week)
TUESDAY	-	10:00 - 10:20	Mid Morning Lunch
		11:45 - 12:10	Banking Hours
		7:30 - 9:30	Girls' Club
		7:15 - 9:00	English Class for Foreign Speaking - Men and Women
WEDNESDAY	-	10:00 - 10:20	Mid Morning Lunch
		1:15 - 1:30	Banking Hours
		3:00 - 4:00	Child Welfare Clinic
THURSDAY	-	10:00 - 10:20	Mid Morning Lunch
		11:45 - 12:10	Banking Hours
		3:00 - 4:00	Italian Mothers' Club
FRIDAY	-	10:00 - 10:20	Mid Morning Lunch
		1:15 - 1:30	Banking Hours

Mrs. William E. Jones, President  
Miss Annie L. Weeks, Director of Community Work

Oct. 21, 1919. "Miss Weeks presented the need for an accompanist for the new Community Chorus about to hold its first meeting. The West Newton Music School will provide a leader to direct the Chorus."

Nov. 18, 1919. "Miss Weeks also suggested the selling of milk at the school luncheons, as many of the children need it. She proposed that one 8 quart can a day be provided for the present. It was so voted."

It is at this time that the first record appears of the use of the title "Director of Community Work" instead



of "Matron" appears. This was in the Annual Report for 1919. It was also in this same report that the coming upon the Board of Miss Lucy Cobb, the present President of the Board, is mentioned as a new Director.

Jan. 27, 1920. " Mrs. Bridges then introduced Mr. Winslow, Head-master of the Stearns School, who gave an informal and inspiring talk on the work of the Stearns School Centre as seen by the Principal. He expressed much appreciation of what is being done and made some suggestions as to other lines of work. He mentioned the possibility of giving a teacher assistance in her class room which would enable her to visit the homes of her pupils. He also spoke of reaching the parents through school exhibitions in which they are interested to see their children take part. His chief suggestion, however, was the establishment of a Bureau of Information which, he thought, would be of very great benefit. "

March 16, 1920. " The Italian Mothers' Club meetings have been intension rather than extension, as a very small number have attended. But this has made it possible to take up with the mothers some problems in the way of care and feeding for their children in a more intimate and detailed way. Wonderful results have been obtained in the Health Class, showing remarkable gains in weight. "

" Miss Weeks spoke of the Council of Social Agencies just formed in Newton which will be composed of the delegates from each organization, one of whom will be the paid worker. "

May 17, 1920. " After much discussion it was voted that the directors could see no satisfactory adjustment of some matters at issue between the Board and Miss Weeks, and therefore accepted with regret the resignation of Miss Weeks still before them, to take effect July 1st. "

Oct. 17, 1920. " Miss Schlechter, the new Director of Work at the School, reported great interest in the Baby Clinic due to Miss Herrick's follow-up work and a commendable spirit of thrift as shown by the increased bank accounts. "

Dec. 21, 1920. " Mrs. Braman reported continued interest in the School Savings Bank with 445 children being enrolled. "

In order to show the continued and abiding interest of some of the founders and also to show the newcomers, we



give the list of Officers and Directors as of 1921.

President  
Mrs. William E. Jones

Vice-Presidents  
Mrs. Samuel W. Bridges      Mrs. Charles W. Davidson

Treasurer  
Mrs. W. Herman Allen

Clerk  
Mrs. George W. Auryansen

Directors

Mrs. W. Herman Allen	Mrs. C. Bemis Gleason
" Ralph W. Angier	" Sidney Harwood
" J. Harris Aubin	" Walter Holbrook
" G.W. Auryansen	" William F. Hollings
" Wallace C. Boyden	" William E. Jones
" Samuel N. Braman	" Henry D. Lloyd
" Charles H. Breck	" Fred H. Loveland
" Samuel W. Bridges	Miss Louise W. Lovett
" Edwin P. Brown	Mrs. William H. Lucas
" Albert P. Carter	" Marcus Morton
" Atherton Clark	" William F. Plant
Miss Lucy Cobb	" Leland Powers
Mrs. A.B. Cobb	" James L. Richards
" Walter A. Corson	" Alfred M. Russell
" Calvert Crary	" George F. Schrafft
" Charles W. Davidson	Miss Louise R. Sherman
" Frank A. Day	Mrs. Harry B. Stebbins
" Henry B. Day	Miss Ethel Todd
" I.S. Dillingham, Jr.	Mrs. Albert W. Todd
" Pitt F. Drew	" Loren D. Towle
" Eben H. Ellison	Miss Helen Wadham
" Frank M. Ferrin	" Grace Weston
" B.W. Fredericks	Mrs. Charles Whittemore
" Alfred W. Fuller	" George H. Wilkins
" Charles Gibson	" Kenelm Winslow

Seven of the above names were on the list of the founders of the Day Nursery in the fall of 1906. Mrs. Jones, in succeeding Mrs. Bridges as President, becomes the fifth one to hold that office.



March 14, 1921. " In speaking of plans for the next year, Miss Schlechter referred to the need of work for adolescent girls. She has talked with Mr. Hermann and Mayor Childs. Both of them feel the importance of directed play for both boys and girls. Mr. Hermann desires a group of volunteers to fit the girls together on the playground in April. On Miss Lovett's motion it was voted that we attempt a work for adolescent children. "

May 17, 1921. " Miss Schlechter's report told of her survey of housing conditions of several incipient T.B. cases and of attempts to find places for children in the country during the summers, of a woman having just lost her 18th baby.

Sept. 27, 1921. " Miss Schlechter's report told of the summer work, vacations for mothers and babies, health work in connection with playgrounds and the vacation kindergarten which was very successful. "

March 21, 1922. " Miss Lovett reported the successful presentation of a musical comedy by the Girls' Club, which was repeated at the Sailors' Haven and will be given later at Parker Hill. The millinery class has opened with 9 members. "

Sept. 26, 1922. " Miss Schlechter gave an amusing account of the arrival and the christening of "Gladys Stearns" the new car, who has proved to be a most valuable helper. "

Oct. 24, 1922. " An important part of the work is called by the School "Broken Attendance Work." She reported the number of calls made in Sept. 1922 as 78 against 41 in the same month of the previous year. "

Jan. 16, 1923. " An unusual feature of the Annual Meeting was the presence of leaders from the various clubs and of their giving reports.

Mrs. Cyr spoke for the Mothers' Club giving a brief history of it and telling of the two whist benefits and various other social activities.

Miss Anna Oliphant told of the organization of the Girls' Club in 1919 and of its increase to a membership of 70, of their visit to the Sailors' Haven, the Old Peoples' Home and of their various classes. She then gave an account of the trip of 7 of their members to the National Convention of Girls' Clubs at Vassar College.

Stella Fay gave a good report of the Junior Girls' Club of 60 members with a program of social,



educational and recreational events.

Lucile Champagne spoke for the Girl Scouts and Helen Landry for the Brownies. "

Feb. 20, 1923. " Miss Schlechter told of the confidence some of the mothers had placed in her in consulting her about their family affairs, showing what a varied work she is doing. "

" In speaking of the Health work she said it was hard to make patients go to the Hospital in the street cars since we have had the auto. "

March 20, 1923. " The resignation of Miss Schlechter was read and accepted with regret. "

April 17, 1923. " No minutes to be found of this meeting which was our first with Miss Yetten. "

Jan. 22, 1924. " The financial condition is good. Mrs. Jones remarked that the Ford car has proved to be a real economy since it has saved the salary of a second worker and much carfare not to mention time and strength. "

Something of the zest with which Miss Yetten undertook her work may be noted from her first annual report of her work. Parts of her reports she was in the habit of printing in a little three page leaflet which she styled " Through the Open Door ", the door of course being the entrance to the Stearns School. Although it is long, we are including this first report of hers to show her effort to relate the work being done at the Stearns School with similar work being carried on in other parts of the country and the world.



ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STEARNS CENTRE SCHOOL  
1923

In February 1923, when the Stearns School Center was considering a new worker it was brought out in the interview that the former worker as well as the board members felt that in considering their program for the coming year they were anxious to have the emphasis placed on extending further the club work which would include a greater recreational program.

The secretary in her report has told you some of the ways that the worker has endeavored to carry out the thought of the organization regarding the program, but before I speak about our club work, I should like to say a few words about School Centres.

Mrs. Eva Whiting White, head worker of the Elizabeth Peabody House, in her report on School Centres, at the 1923 National Conference of Social Work, brought out the fact that the mind is sweeping toward tremendous and fundamental issues of world inter-relationship, and that one of the great lines of analysis and action that thinkers everywhere are coming to is as follows; intensive study of group organizations and power on a neighborhood basis, and she goes on to say that the facts point to the truth that only as neighborhoods come to function co-operatively with other neighborhoods on a basis of wholesome soundness, intelligence, and vision can the nation meet the challenge of a better municipal order, and that it has been demonstrated that national strength rests on efficient municipal units, within which there must be a strong citizenship.

A worker at the end of a year may be able to produce amazing statistical results but unless she is pretty clear about the value of the material gain and can tie her work up not only with her own community but with her city, state, nation and nations, it of course has little if any value. Therefore, I am again going to quote Mrs. White because she has brought out so remarkably how our work, which seems so small to us, ties up in the whole scheme of the world affairs. "Neighborhoods", she says, "are, in a sense, personifications of people, and present similarities as to traits of weakness and strength, and, like individuals, have suffered from the lack of opportunity or have profited by every educational and civic means. History has again proved that national strength cannot be gauged by government, but only by the response of the small units that make up a nation."

Mrs. White goes on to say that "Important as the personal ties of the family are, family life is enriched



through the currents of outside association that play through it as the results of its members in their natural social troupes. Without the larger group life", she continues, "there would be a condition of social starvation. Resting back of the motive of the community centre, there is not only the necessity of localizing the range of action of a citizenship on a neighborhood basis but also the need of enriching all that there is in ties of association." Mrs. White concludes. I am sure we feel that there are many important features about school centres that we can learn through Mrs. White.

In order that you may learn something about the breadth of the school centre movement you may be interested to note that according to the last statistics presented by the Playground and Recreation Association of America, 183 cities and towns have publicly supported community centres opened under leadership, and 152 cities provide for the use of school buildings.

New York was the first city to open schools definitely for recreation. In 1897 the Board of Education permitted the use of a number of rooms for boys' clubs on certain evenings when the building was open for classes.

A step in advance was taken in 1903 by a group of Boston citizens who induced the school board to grant the use of two basement rooms in a school house as a meeting place for a neighborhood club of young working boys.

Later in 1905 a single experiment in a school proved the case for a school in Chicago. Still later in 1913 Newton women were responsible for our school centre.

Yet, though progress has been made Mr. Robert A. Woods, and Albert J. Kennedy feel that school centres labor under some very decided disadvantages from the point of view of sound neighborhood organization. They feel that the term usually varies from four to seven months and that there is no vital principle of continuity in its administration. I think we agree this is very true in many school centres, but Nonantum is, first, a small community of about six thousand persons, and, second, the term is nine months for some Club work, and ten months for other club work, with a worker in the community eleven months of the year. In this way we stand out as functioning more like the settlements, and, therefore, are rather a distinctive school centre.

In studying the purpose and aims of a centre, it is interesting to note that Clarence Arthur Perry in his book on "Community Centre Activities" says, "The theory is that community centre work consists mainly in organizing and developing group activities. This is accomplished in the



several ways of giving accommodations to groups which already have none, and of bringing people into group relations who are not already enjoying them. The activity is the cement which holds the individual together in the group unit."

In applying this to our own work we can truly say that when a social worker approaches us about girls in our neighborhood, fifteen or sixteen years old, who accept street invitations to go night riding with strangers because they have nothing to do, it makes us realize that as a centre we must provide sufficient recreation that is stimulating enough to reach these girls before they are lured into the many pitfalls. Can we begin too young? The answer we all agree is - "No".

You ask - "How and when do we begin?" At the age of seven and one-half, little girls in our neighborhood may take part in our Brownie Life. We have at present forty-two little Brownies who meet with us each week, and through their program, which is all worked out through play, they are building the foundation which is preparing them for the Girl Scout Troop that their older sisters belong to.

For the boys of this age we have a Toy Making Class that was organized for the purpose of reaching the physically handicapped boy, the boy who may not have any one at home to show any interest in him, and still the boy who needs to be led by right leadership to express himself.

Is it not true that the problematic child often needs that very thing, group pressure, and that the problem of the child many times can be met through giving him the opportunity of group experience instead of dealing with him from an individual point of view and unless we provide a place with adequate leadership, he is not going to get it?

Then to return to the girls as they pass through the transitional stage where some girls either never become scouts or others wish to graduate from them, they have the opportunity of joining "The Just-a-Mere" or the "Reach-a-Point Club."

The ages of these girls range from fourteen to eighteen and the former club aims to reach the needs of the working and school girl who already have had a taste for the public dance hall, but still want the experience that club life brings.

The club program aims to direct the legitimate desires of the adolescent girl in the right channel by giving her the opportunity to express herself through dramatics



and dances where she learns to plan and carry out her own program. The monthly dance that the club is working out this fall provides an opportunity for the girls to discuss standards at which very vital points are brought up, discussed and a conclusion reached by the girls. The latter club aims to reach the needs of the girl who is seemingly less sophisticated and therefore enjoys a more simple program.

All of you will be interested to hear of the new Boys' Club for boys fourteen to eighteen years of age. Through the splendid efforts of the leader, fifteen boys in our community are able to realize what it means to have an organized club with a program that includes, athletics, talks, dramatics, and parties that the girls club mentioned above, enjoy.

Then, too, as our girls reach eighteen, they again pass into the Senior Girls' Club where so many activities are carried on. These activities the Club leader, Miss Lovett, will tell you about. You may next wonder what happens to the girls when they marry or think they are too old to come to the Girls' Club. At this point they are always welcome in our Mothers' Club of ninety seven mothers that range in age from nineteen to seventy.

Indeed, our report would be quite incomplete if no mention were made of our assistant Gladys Ford Stearns and the value she is to the worker and organization. Some days from early morning until late at night, Gladys is kept busy and it is through her that a worker is able first, to keep in close contact with the community by the many visits in the homes; second, that so many school calls are possible; and third, that we are able to offer hospital transportation to those in the community that would otherwise find it extremely difficult to go. One month it was possible to make ninety five calls along with the other work, and fourteen of these calls were hospital visits with patients. This fall Gladys has made trips to the Harvard Dental every other week with six children or adults, whose teeth would otherwise be neglected, because of the lack of dental facilities in Newton to care for the number of children whose teeth need attention. This is all done in co-operation with the school nurse, and one day when I asked her what would happen to the children's teeth if we did not take them to the Harvard Dental, she replied "They would be neglected, as it would be impossible for me to take to the Harvard Dental, all those children who cannot be cared for in Newton".

Then, too, as a worker comes to know her community, she is able to offer transportation to the mother who might otherwise carry their babies to the clinics or neglect to

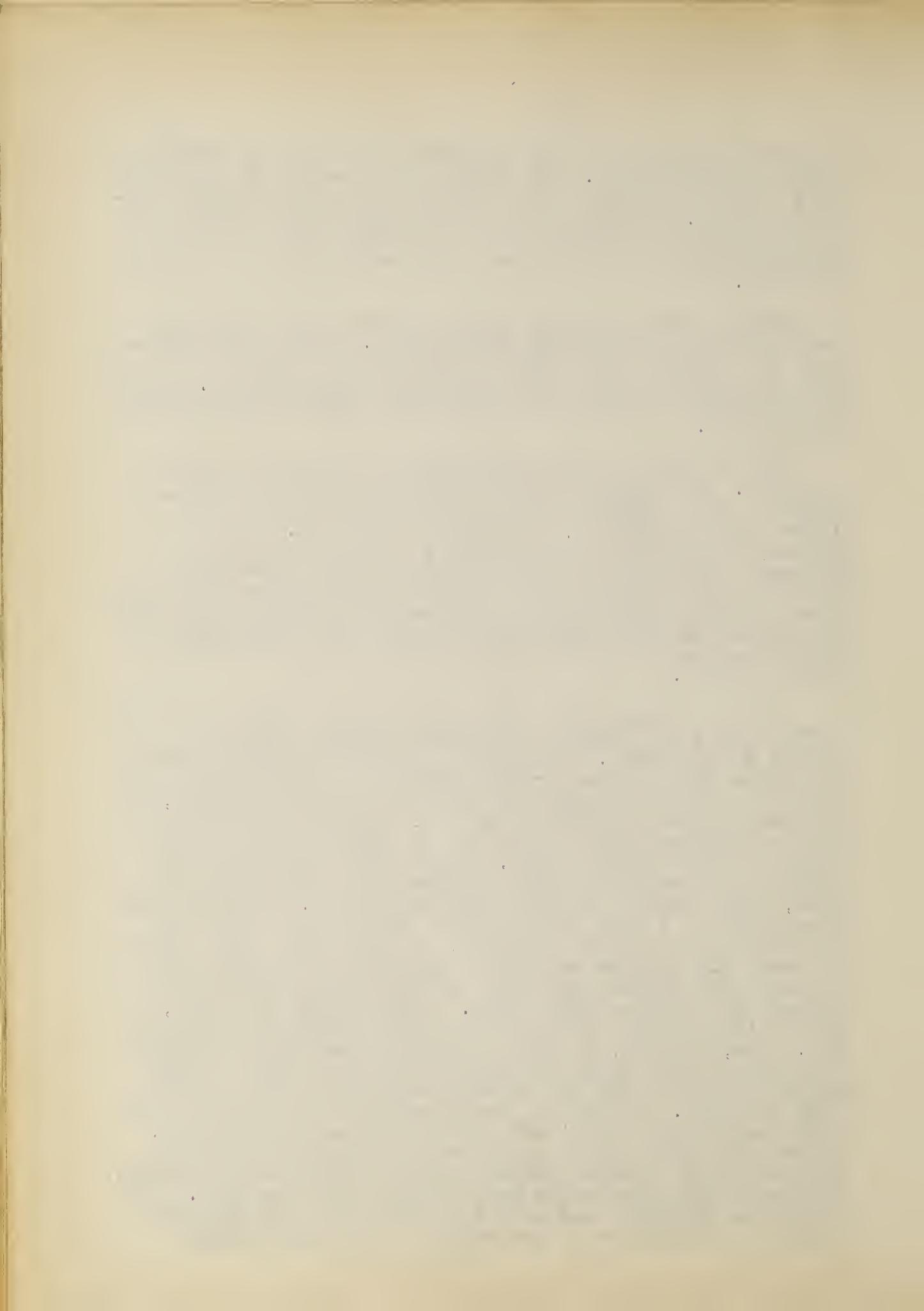


take the child or herself, because it would be so difficult under the conditions. Not long ago one woman who had had a very serious operation was discharged as a one hundred percent patient. I feel that this was partly due to the care we were able to give this woman in taking her to and from the hospital for the follow-up care that the doctor had to give her.

Another way in which we are able to assist in the Health work is through the Baby Clinic. Two of the directors are present each week at the clinic to assist the nurse with the weighing and interpreting for the Italians. We are fortunate in having an active Baby Clinic twelve months in the year.

Now we come to that department of our work, school visiting. In looking over some school visitors report, I find the first school visitors work began in the year 1906-7 in New York City, Boston and Hartford. In these cities, and later in other places, as has frequently happened with other educational experiments, the impulse came from outside the school system. Private organization like the Public Education Associates, Settlements, and Civic organizations first supported the work until the school authorities recognized its value and made it part of the school system.

At the present time there are school visitors in about fifty cities and counties scattered through twenty six states of the Union. The school visitors' special charges are those children who present problems of scholarship, or conduct of a troublesome, erratic or suspicious nature, or who show signs of apparent neglect, or other difficulties with which the regular staff of the school finds itself unable to cope with unaided. These home visits that the worker makes with the child in mind when she enters the home, often uncover serious home conditions. Not long ago I was sent to a home to see why a little eight year old boy was sent to school so dirty. A young girl about twenty years old invited me into a very disorderly home and in our conversation, she told me that her mother was not living and that she kept house. Her brother, she said, was a little demon and almost set their house on fire one day. Yes, in fact, she got so discouraged trying to keep this house clean that she thought she might just as well marry the sailor boy who spent most every evening of the week with her. It was not long before she was hearing all about our Senior Girls' Club with their many activities. A few days later when I made another visit she casually told me of her younger sister, who was expectorating blood, but she thought she would be all right in a few days. Although our progress has been a little slow, the girl followed the suggestion of the worker by calling in their



doctor. Through the Doctor, the worker has been able to get the permission of the family to have further medical attention at one of our Boston Hospitals.

During the year we have some calls for employment from boys, girls, men and women. Only last summer, one of our girls spent three weeks at a summer hotel with a woman who has since been a great help to the girl and the girl has proved to be a great help to the woman.

In a neighborhood as heterogeneous as Nonantum I think we have a perfect right to feel that all our work has an element of Americanization in it, from the school visit where we are often able to break down the barrier that exists between the foreigner and us, to the Mothers' Club with its seven nationalities.

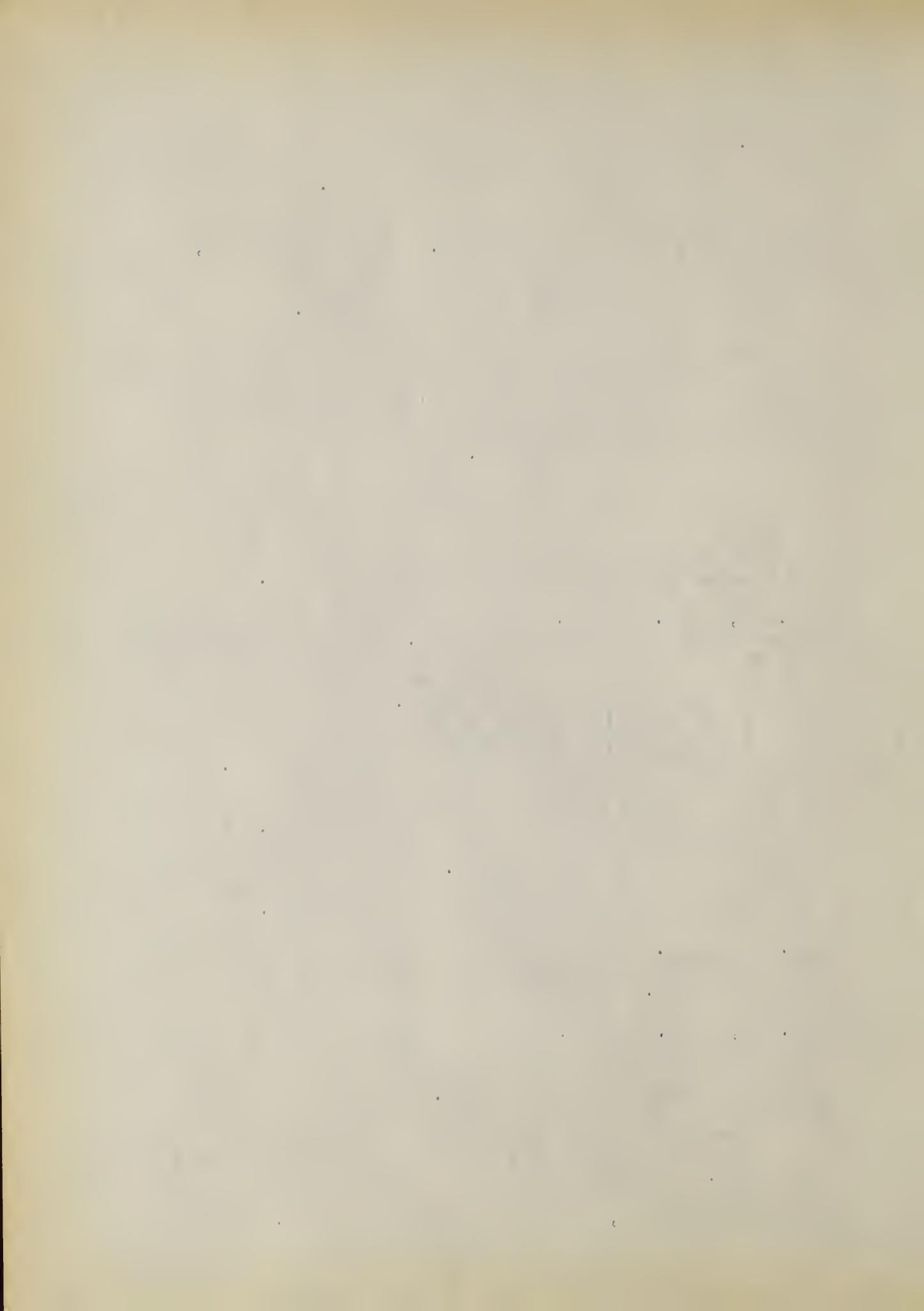
Pauline Yetten, Community Worker.

The custom of having a visiting speaker at the Annual Meeting was still carried out we find in 1924.

Jan. 22, 1924. " Mrs. Jones then introduced Miss Dougherty of the Roxbury Neighborhood House. She spoke cordially of the school and community work, which she said was an ideal combination, and quoted Joseph Lee as saying that school visiting was a most important work. She said the training of youth to use its leisure wisely is a significant and important enterprise and gave us great encouragement in our recreational program by her emphasis upon it. She found great danger in getting away from small groups - little girls need training in organizations and this training should begin before the adolescent period. Begin with small groups of girls of 8 years and keep up ideals even if the children do not like it. She spoke of the value of dramatics and closed with an exhortation to get in anything you can to cultivate the art of reading. "

Feb. 18, 1924. " Miss Sturgis has suggested a Club for backward girls thus caring for a group of 8 or 9 who are mental misfits. "

Jan. 25, 1925. " Mrs. Jones introduced Miss Mary Keene of the Roxbury School Centre who told us of her work in another community very different from ours but presenting similar problems in other forms. The main reason for opening the school building she said was to unite the neighbors in the only place where neighbors as such can meet and by forming them together to develop a social democracy. She said their policy was to bring all the community together including men who are seldom drawn to a community house, and to combine all groups. If social



relations are ideal then Christ-like civic relations will take care of themselves.

Another of their aims was to break down barriers between races and religions, educated and uneducated, and between young and old. They emphasize as we are doing the social and recreational side and try to develop a spirit of self-reliance. "

May 18, 1925. " Mrs. Kidder, one of the Stearns School teachers, explained the value of the Opportunity Classes of which it is expected that there will be three next year instead of one. In such classes the misfits are given special attention and handwork is stressed. The Vocational High School is the objective of these pupils. This individual care saves these backward children a loss of a year's time. "

Oct. 19, 1925. " Mrs. Jones then took up the business of Miss Yetten's resignation reading her letter received last summer. On Mrs. Bridges motion it was voted to accept this resignation and to instruct the secretary to write her a letter of appreciation. "

" Mrs. Jones then read the correspondence relating to the subject of engaging a new worker. Through Miss Yetten's efforts Mrs. Jones had been able to get in touch with one highly recommended and apparently well qualified for the work and Miss Emily Reed has been engaged for 3 months at a salary of \$1800 a year. "

Jan. 18, 1926. " Miss Lucy Cobb was elected President of the Stearns School Centre. "

" One of the new features of the year is the Colonna Club of Italian young women, a group of which gladly accepted Miss Yetten's guidance last year and has been greatly helped by the leadership of a cultivated woman of their own race, who has been meeting with them this fall. Understanding their language and their point of view, she has been able to help them more than we can and we hope very much that Mrs. Merlino can spare us a little time from her own full life as a pastor's wife to help this group of Italian girls grow into a responsible Club. Already the Italians are outnumbering the other races in Nonantum and every influence that helps these girls grow into intelligent womanhood and citizenship is of utmost importance to the community. The girls are growing away from the Italian home, with its limitation, the church has none too strong a hold upon them and the movie theatre and cheap dance hall are a strong pull away from influences that will help them to become wise home-makers and mothers of the next generation. There is a



strong challenge to us here as well as in the problem of the Junior girls. "

Oct. 16, 1927. " Miss Reed told of the spring and summer activities including a representation from the Mothers' Club at the Home Improvement Association in Boston, a very successful banquet, a social evening at the Boston Italian restaurant attended by 45 including members of the Colonna Club and their guests; and a weekend houseparty at Manomet for the Junior girls through the courtesy of Miss Cobb. She further reported that this fall all the clubs have started out with enthusiasm. "

Jan. 24, 1928. " Mrs. Wombolt, the President of the Mothers' Club, with a fine sporting spirit, invited them to inspect her kitchen, which is far from being a model, and to study out, with the help of Mrs. Williams, ways to improve it. Thirty were present, and it was a most inspiring meeting. I wonder how many of us, if we had to cook for a family of twelve, would be ready to open our kitchens for clinical purposes, so to speak! "

Jan. 28, 1929. " At the March meeting Miss Cobb had brought us word that Miss Reed who stayed with us the third year under protest had tendered her irrevocable resignation, so we were forced to accept it, with her promise to stand by until someone could be found to take her place.

Before school closed in June, Miss Helen Sandstrom, a friend of Mrs. Clark, came on from Philadelphia to look over our work and confer with the Directors. Miss Reed introduced her to the Clubs and took her around the district. The result of her visit was a mutual attraction and Miss Sandstrom was engaged to come to us in September. She has had training and experience. She comes to us from a very strenuous life in an Episcopal Settlement Home in Philadelphia. She fits happily into the work at the School, a relation that calls for both tact and patience on both sides in a building by no means equipped for social work and over-crowded by the School. She has already made many friends among the people of the community. "

To complete the picture and bring it up to date, we shall close this chapter with the outline of her activities as furnished by Miss Sandstrom in 1931.



Clubs as Now Conducted by the Centre

1. Brownie Pack - girls (7 to 9) these are the girls of the Girl Scouts.
2. Cooking Class-A group - (9, 10, 11 yrs.) (4,5,6 grades) for girls.
3. Cooking Class-B group - (9, 10, 11 yrs.) (4,5,6 grades) for girls.
4. Sewing Class (same ages as cooking classes).
5. Folk Dancing Class (3rd grade girls).
6. Boys Game Room (Table games for 20 boys - little fellows).
7. Needle Work Club (6th grade girls) - learn fancy sewing.
8. Handcraft Class - girls (4,5,6th grades) learn leather-work, painting, paper work, etc.
9. Backward Girls - Robins - Problem girls and Opportunity Group type - simple sewing and cooking.
10. Backward Girls - Bluebirds - Problem girls and Opportunity Group type - sewing and cooking.
11. Music Group - Piano instruction for girls who have a piano in their own homes.
12. Mothers' Club - women - twice a month - Monday evenings - Educational & Recreational.
13. Senior Girls - Business girls - 18 and up - Educational, Recreational and Simple Dressmaking.
14. Italian Group - girls 14 to 18 of Italian parentage - Tuesday evenings.
15. Supper Club - Problem girls with court records mostly interested in Dramatics.

Sources of Volunteer Workers

1. Mrs. Farmer's School of Cooking - teacher of cooking.
2. Sargent School - teacher of folk dancing.
3. Boston University - teacher of backward group.



4. Married Senior Club member - teacher of sewing.
5. Interested members of the Stearns School Centre Board.
6. Various Teachers in the School.
7. Junior League - various neighboring communities.
8. Interested Members of the Community - for entertaining, coaching dramatics, etc.

Organization of Stearns School Centre Board

A self perpetuating board of 45 members among the women of Newton (chiefly Newton Corner and Newtonville). There are no annual dues. Board raises budget of better than \$3000. by giving bridges, lectures and getting several hundred subscribers to contribute.

Worker serves as Home Visitor for the School

Makes systematic calls on homes of all club members. (30 to 40 calls per month with sometimes as high as 70 to 80 each). Helps teachers and principal on home conditions.

Assists the Following Community Workers

Miss Sturgis - Sch. Psychiatrist - general level of the family.

Mrs. Wellman - Probation Officer - several probationers in clubs.

Mrs. Chapin - Newton Welfare Bureau.

Miss Welch - School Nurse.

Dental Clinic - takes children to various dental clinics, local, Forsythe and Harvard.

Judge Baker Foundation - checks up on case under their advisement.



CHAPTER V.

WHAT PRICE THE EFFORT?

INFLUENCES AND VALUES.

Miss Jane Addams, of Hull House, Chicago, makes the simple statement that "True democracy is neighborliness". In attempting to make some estimate of the worth of the years of the existence of Hull House, she says further: "I think that time has justified our early contention that the mere foothold of a house easily accessible, ample in space, hospitable and tolerant in spirit, situated in the midst of the large foreign colonies which so easily isolate themselves in American cities, would be in itself a serviceable thing for Chicago. I am not so sure we succeeded in our endeavors to make social intercourse express the growing sense of the economic unity of society and to add the social function of democracy. But Hull House was soberly opened on the theory that the dependence of classes on each other is reciprocal; and that as the social relation is essentially a reciprocal relation, it gives a form of expression that has peculiar value. "

Mrs. G.W. Auryansen in one of her records of the work of the Stearns School Centre has this interesting bit of a commentary: "I was amazed to find in going over my notes lately to discover what an interesting story it all is. Perhaps nobody will ever read these books of our records except myself and the next clerk. But I'm not



sorry the records are there. For they tell the story of the patient 'littles' by which we have established our centre as a friend of the Nonantum community."

Certainly no yard stick of human devising can ever measure the worth of the efforts that have been recorded in the three previous chapters of thus study. For just as failure has been said to be the "difference between what one is and what one might have become", so the critic can never truly estimate what such a community would have been without the work done by the Stearns School Centre. It is all too true that the failures as a rule never get written into the book. They fade into the unknown and the unrecorded past. Only the final judgment of eternity may serve to show them to us in a true light.

Mr. Albert J. Kennedy, formerly of the South End House, Boston, says that: "Fulfillment is the best term in which to describe the present day social work. It means taking the average person and giving them the chance to fulfill their best possibilities. It is a matter of the will rather than a mechanical process." And it is with this idea of "fulfillment" that we present the following sheaf of subjective opinions of a representative group of people who have had a chance to either share in the work at Stearns School or else observe it closely. How well Mr. Winslow has regarded the Stearns School Centre work may be repeatedly gleaned from the annals of the various



Clerks as noted in Chapters II, III and IV. We let these others speak their own words on the subject. An attempt has been made to include some of these on the "receiving" end as well as those who have been among the "givers".



Ulysses G. Wheeler, Superintendent,  
Newton School Dept.

The School Centre, under the direction of a trained leader, is a valuable asset to any school or community, benefitting both the homes and the school in a most helpful way.

It frequently happens that poor attendance and lack of interest of pupils are due to home conditions. The social worker is able to interpret the school to parents and thus bring about a more helpful co-operation.

Mrs. Sara S. Clark, Former Director  
of Community Work.

I quote the statement of Miss Clark of the Department of Education in Rochester:

" The community with its common interest, its common life, and its work for the common good, is particularly interesting to the visiting teacher because of the relation it bears to the welfare of the children who become subjected to its influences in out-of-school hours. The community web has six threads: health, work, play, education, companionship, and moral training, any one of which becoming tangled or broken to the detriment of the child must be mended or unravelled. It is in such instances that the visiting teacher functions most effectively as her task is primarily to bring the school and the community agencies into active co-operation in the interests of the child. "

I have always contended that truancy was a big factor to be considered in the Nonantum district. A truant officer's call to the home is short and concise, and he attempts cure only. The visiting teacher goes to the child's home and takes time to discover the cause, remove it when possible, or by persistent attention, establish regularity in attendance. Sometimes a working certificate complicates matters and is solved by the school visitor, who persuades the parents to keep the child in school, and by so doing, conserves mental and physical vitality, and later on, sends forth a better workman.

Misbehaviour and poor scholarship are always problems presenting themselves. The average grade teacher has neither time, energy, nor training, while the school visitor can interpret to the home the demands of the school, and explain, in turn, the home difficulties to the teacher.



Mrs. George Auryansen, Past President and  
Clerk of the Stearns School Centre.

After something like twenty years of first hand contact with the Stearns School Centre, I am still enthusiastic over the work.

The influence upon children is not to be measured by figures, but I am confident that the health of the community is much better for the various activities of baby clinics, nutrition clinics, school luncheons, and follow-up work on the part of nurses and our secretary.

The Senior Girls' Club must by this time be recruited from girls who as children have belonged to some of the clubs and classes. They have been a real club for ten years or more, showing initiative, independence, and in many instances a real spirit of social service.

The Mothers' Club has evolved from sewing classes to an organized society, paying regular dues, electing its own officers, and making out its own programs. While it is largely a recreation club, and there is nothing highbrow about their programs, they do consider problems of home-making and civic responsibility.

The Dramatic contest, in which they have worked hard for three years, shows real dramatic ability, good sportsmanship, and a quality of persistence much to be commended.

The social and friendly contacts with the directors is one of the important by-products of the centre. The directors themselves value highly the friendships formed with these hard-working and unprivileged women.

Mrs. Celia Wellman, Probation Officer,  
Newton District Court.

I think there is no more important work than a community centre such as the Stearns School Centre. It enables the Social worker to establish friendly relations with the parents. Also to make early contact with the young children in the families. It is the only way I know in which the child under five years of age can be influenced and helped. We cannot begin too early with children to prevent the forming of bad habits, learned on the streets and elsewhere. After fifteen years in the Newton District Court, I can testify to the great help the Stearns School Centre has been to me.



Miss Louise Lovett, Volunteer Club Leader and member of Board of Directors, Stearns School Centre.

I presume what you would like is my point of view as a volunteer worker with the Senior Girls' Club.

I believe that the clubs of the Stearns School Centre play a very important part in the lives of the young people of Nonantum. So many girls have said they would never have had so many friends, if it hadn't been for the club, - many lasting friendships were made, also many marriages, through meeting brothers at dances, etc. I believe that supervised dances, where the young people themselves are responsible, are a very great help.

Twelve of the older girls who have really outgrown the club, and the majority are married now, meet every two weeks in their own homes. I believe this group will always hold together! I have put this in to show what the club means in their future, for some of them live at a distance.

The dramatics which come into most of the club work are a very strong factor, even with the young children. They gain self-confidence and poise which proves a great help in their lives and usually helps to make the girls feel a real club spirit.

The senior girls learned many practical things in their various classes, - dressmaking, millinery, basketry, and the making of serving trays and lamp shades, also cooking. They had many lectures on travels, current events, economics, trade, art of dressing; - once a year some doctor speaks on health in various practical ways which always seemed a real help. One year they held a course on Art with trips to the Art Museum and Mrs. Gardner's Palace.

Of course, through the club work I knew many families and came in contact with the mothers and fathers, which I believe is the way a volunteer can help the most, especially in sickness and in unusual cases.

When mothers and sometimes aunts say that their girls would never have been the same if it hadn't been for the club and their contact with the volunteer workers, I believe the work is more than justified. I really believe the friendships which have been made through the directors of the Stearns School Centre and the people of Nonantum have done as much for the Community as any one thing.



Mrs. Arthur Hovgaard, Playground Director,  
Stearns School Centre Playground.

As I have observed, the work of the Stearns School Centre is divided into two phases: personal calls at the home, and activities at the school.

The influences of a trained social case worker in making contacts with the home through a personal call are many. She understands the value of a pleasant approach, is able to analyze the situation, and in some ways is instrumental in solving the problem at hand. Thus a feeling of confidence is established between the home and the school centre.

Nonantum has a large foreign population, mostly Italians. Many of them naturally find it difficult to adjust themselves to the struggle for existence in America. Some of them need assistance medically, others need employment, and all of them need preparation for their new social environment.

Through the activities at the school many are reached, particularly children. How does this affect life of school children? Education is growth, a preparation for the later life of the child. The centre offers various activities, recreation, etc., giving child an opportunity to develop, socially by free and wholesome mingling with other children, mentally by spontaneous application and alertness such as you are bound to get if child is actively engaged in some game or club activity.

Through games and recreation a sense of leadership is often discovered among the children, much to the pleasure of the child. Sometimes this stimulates the child, so that he will make a greater effort in the classroom.

Many of the children and young people in Nonantum have a poor home environment. The Stearns School Centre has made an attempt to offer wholesome supervised recreation. I have in mind now a group of girls 14 - 16. They were noisy, unruly, full of energy, just aching to get into mischief. Through the efforts of the centre a club was formed and effort is being made to direct the surplus energy of those "problem" girls into constructive channels.



Mrs. Dorothy S. Waterhouse, Former Head-Worker  
of Stearns School Centre

I have always felt that the greatest influence of the Stearns School Centre work has been shown in the homes of the Girls' Club first, and secondly, in the Mothers' Club. While of course the girls loved the sociability of their meetings, I think that unconsciously they were assimilating the most good from their contact with the women like Miss Lovett, Mrs. Schraft, Eleanor Hall, Miss Wadham, etc., who came to assist at their meetings. It was likewise with the mothers under Mrs. Davidson, Mrs. Auryansen, Mrs. Boyden, etc. Perhaps it was due to the companionable spirit in which these women always came that made the girls and mothers feel that they were not outsiders coming just to instruct and criticize, and they really loved these volunteers who came down and wanted to be and do like them.

The girls especially were invited to parties at the homes of these people and they began to see how their homes were conducted and furnished, etc. They developed ideas of good taste and good breeding without having them forced on them. They got the correct ideas of home management, entertaining, etc., which they could have had in no better way.

The relationship which developed between the girls of the club (and they were all girls through school) and the mothers was remarkable. Instead of considering their mothers "put on the shelf", these girls enjoyed entertaining their mothers occasionally, and joining with them at various functions. They felt their mothers deserved as many good times as they themselves.

As Miss Lovett probably told you, we occasionally play bridge with a club consisting of old Girls' Club members. About half of them are married, and with families, too. It is wonderful to observe how exact and modern their ideas are about bringing up their babies and about furnishing their homes, etc. Their homes are as well organized as any you would wish to visit. Certainly I feel that much of this is due to earlier impressions and influences received through their associations at the Stearns School Centre, and that because of its existence their ideals and standards are much higher than they otherwise would have been.

The advantage of being centered in a group as they are makes friendships which last. Without the club the girls would doubtless have sought their recreation in small groups, or just with boy friends. Now, though married, the old groups cling together. Their husbands,



and their mothers, too, join with them in many of their functions. It is not unusual to find several of the club girls joining together to help some one of their old club friends who has been less fortunate.

As I see the girls now, after having been away from them for several years, I can't help but feel that they are of a much higher type in ideals and standards of living than they would have been had they not had the benefits of the Centre.

I think that the tendency of girls of the type we deal with is often this. Due to having more education than their parents were ever able to have, they sometimes are inclined to feel themselves superior to their parents, and anxious to grow away from them, or to dominate them. Because their parents in the School Centre are given an important place in the social life of the Centre, the girls do not look down on them, and have a much greater respect for their homes.

Mrs. M. Estelle Seaver, Americanization  
Teacher in Nonantum

During a period of eleven years or more, my work has brought me in touch with the Stearns School Centre, its Directors and has given me a chance to note something of its influence in the homes.

I believe my first contact was through presenting Cooking Demonstrations for the Director. Even at that date efforts were being made to help better home conditions through instruction given the mothers at Stearns School. It was hoped that the problem of malnutrition might be attacked and at least partially solved in this way.

As a health worker for two summers on the Playgrounds I visited both with the incumbent Director, and alone, in the homes of the district. In practically all cases I found the Director was welcomed, and eagerly consulted in all sorts of emergencies, and her assistance depended upon. The efficiency of the work done must necessarily depend to a great degree upon the personality of the Director; her sympathy, good comradeship, sincerity of purpose, withal her wisdom which must guard her from the equally fatal pitfalls of credulity or cynicism.

There have been sporadic attempts to touch the young men members of the community, but as far as I know, nothing has persisted but Scouts.



The efforts of the Centre have been extended toward reaching the homes in any possible helpful way, with the emphasis perhaps on the recreational side. The Play-ground now provides valuable assistance in that field.

To the newcomer in the district I do not know what place the Centre occupies, but to those long acquainted with the neighborhood it seems to have made a definite place for itself.

Miss Ruth Chapin, Secretary of the  
Newton Welfare Bureau

Perhaps the one thing which we of the Welfare Bureau would point out as to the worthwhileness of the work of the Stearns School Centre is the value of the Club life to the members of the families with which we deal. Usually we see these folks when things are out of joint for them and they are under a great deal of pressure, financial, and mental. At the affairs of the School Centre we have a chance to see them in their lighter vein. At these times the other side of life is uppermost and their minds are free from care.

Comparatively few of the Italian families attend church these days. Many of these families would have little or no normal group contacts were it not for the School Centre.

Then also it is a great help to us to be able to further the placing of many individuals - girls and boys who need group activities - in the group organizations conducted by the Stearns School Centre. We furnish the clothes and help dress them up so that they can go without feeling an inferiority complex. There have been many instances where the results were far-reaching. In this way we have been able to drain off harmful negative tendencies and then begin to build up wholesome traits in their places. We are glad to raise the money to do this sort of thing because we feel it has a dollar and cents value, as well as the intangible values not so easily discerned.

Miss Pauline Yetten, Former Director  
of Community Work

A suburban school centre, like the Stearns School Centre, supplements the work of the school in the following ways:



1. It provides a school visitor to follow up social problems in connection with various children.
2. The worker co-operates with the principal, teachers, pupils, school nurse, and all other workers in the community in every way that is a help to them in working out a problem with a child.
3. The worker makes friendly contacts with the principal and teachers in order to learn more about individual pupils that might be benefited by various club activities outside of school. I remember the principal permitting a special class to have a club and meet during school hours because he felt this particular class might be benefited by such activity and contact with one of our workers.
4. In special cases financial aid has been given.
5. Opportunity for children to be sent away in the summer has been provided for children who need this change.

Mrs. Elliott B. Church, Member of the Stearns School Centre Board of Directors

At the Y.M.C.A. the other day the Stearns School Centre was hostess to the Newton Central Council. Luncheon for fifty had to be prepared and served. Four mothers from the Centre eagerly laid aside their home demands to come and share in the task. And when one of the Directors remarked that it was but a continuation of their already fatiguing duties at home, the reply came quickly, "Oh, but this is fun". It was a contact for those women which brought new thoughts and a certain diversion from the routine. An opportunity was given them to use their ideas, to feel that they were making a real contribution to someone.

Amateur theatricals. Love of acting is an innate instinct in everybody. Aspiration to membership in the Foot-lights and to appearing on the boards of the Stearns School stage is different merely in degree. Tired mothers forget their weariness when they are selected for a part and have the privilege of being coached by a competent member of a large dramatic club. They help to win the judges' award for their group; they know that they are contributing to their group.

Miss Sandstrom is able through tactful approach to these reserved Italian women to persuade them to let their children benefit by the advantages offered - advantages which seem to these foreign-born like innovations more



often than not distasteful to them. Any worker must have infinite patience, tact, ready sympathy, an understanding heart to win the confidence of these newcomers to our land. It may be question of taking defective children to a Boston school better-suited to the clouded brain; it may mean a visit to the dental clinic; it may be the discussing of some family difficulty, financial or otherwise - matters such as these are on the records of any one who has worked as successfully as has Miss Sandstrom. They are matters which would not be touched by the busy teachers who are seldom if ever in the habit of calling in the homes.

The Directors have an immeasurably far-reaching influence through the welcome accorded groups from time to time in their own homes. One lady gives cooking lessons in her own kitchen to some little girls aged eleven or twelve. Those children are taught how to prepare some wholesome dish, how to serve it, and they know how to eat it! One's own imagination can supply the unmentioned resulting impressions and ideas which those children take back into their homes. Another group is made welcome in one of the most artistic houses of Newton, given a chance to dance there informally, to have various other forms of entertainment, to have suppers. This must be one of the soul-satisfying contacts for the Italians with their love of beauty in art.

The "homes touched" are reached in this way rather than by any calls made on the part of the Directors.

Mrs. William Seaward, Member of  
the Mothers' Club.

I have been a member of the Womens' Club ever since it has been in existence. During all the years, it has been a bright spot in the friendships I have formed with the other women and with the workers of the Stearns School Centre. The fact that the meetings have been largely recreational has meant that we could drop our household and family cares to have a jolly good time with others who were just as busy and tired as we were. Now a younger group of mothers is coming to take the places of those of us who are old timers. In this way the Club will go on and continue to unite the different groups who live here in Nonantum.



Mrs. Emily M. Cyr, Member of the  
Mothers' Club.

I joined the Mothers' Club of the Stearns School Centre seventeen years ago when I first came to Newton to live. During all those years the Club has had its ups and downs but still it has held many of the older members together all that time.

It quite naturally has developed along recreational lines. As one of the mothers said, "We have work enough at home and we come here for a good time". The Club enabled the women of the several races living in Nonantum to get together on a friendly basis, all of which has been beneficial to us and the community.

In the early days there were many French speaking mothers who profited by the classes in English which were conducted by the School Centre before the School Department formed their Americanization classes.

Mrs. John Russo, Member of the  
Mothers' Club.

I am one of the younger and newer members of the Mothers' Club. As a young wife and the mother of four children, it has been helpful to me to have the chance to extend my acquaintance among the women of Nonantum. The older members of the Club have welcomed us into their friendship and have taken an interest in us.

The chance to meet the women of other parts of the city, such as Mrs. Boyden and Mrs. Auryansen, has been worthwhile. Our being invited to their homes has shown us standards of home making which we would not otherwise have known. The Club has tended to stir us up toward bettering our own homes and our standards of living.

To me the dramatic work has been ever so interesting. In competing in the contest each year against the girls and the younger women, we have had to work hard. I have gotten a great deal out of the two plays in which I have taken part.



Miss Anna Morrison, Member of the  
Girls' Club

The outstanding thing which the Girls' Club has meant to me has been the fellowship with girls of the several races living here in Nonantum. We had Irish, French, Jewish and Italian girls among the membership in those early days of the Club. Our motto was; "To have and to share". That really came to mean something in the lives of our members. The clique spirit so common in many places did not have a chance to exist because the spirit of "one for all" was uppermost.

The opportunity to attend several of the national gatherings of the Federation of Girls' Clubs gave me valuable contacts with girls from other cities and towns. Attendance at these conventions gave us a sense of "belonging" to something bigger than our own little group at home.

Mrs. Irene C. Colligan, Member of the  
Girls' Club.

As I look back to the active years of my membership in the Girls' Club, I feel that many valuable benefits came to me.

Chief among these was the social contact with the girls and with the members of the Stearns School Centre Board who opened their homes to entertain us. Girls from homes with little or no training in the matter of good manners learned by observation and contact with others better standards which have proved valuable to them ever since.

One year we had a speaker who talked to us on keeping a budget of one's personal expenses. When I came to marry and have a home of my own the importance of carefully planning the family expenditures, as emphasized by this speaker, became very real to me.

Our bunch seemed to develop a wonderful spirit of working together. Possibly because there were fewer opportunities in those days, we let nothing interfere with our attendance at our meetings and social parties. The girls themselves set very high standards for their dances and were able to hold their boy friends up to a similar attitude in regard to clean, wholesome entertainment. It was through one of these parties that I first met my husband.

The development which came through taking part in the dramatic work of the Club was very helpful. By the



training which we had under trained coaches we gained in self-confidence and ease in meeting other people. The fact that we often repeated our plays at the Old Folks Home or for other organizations taught us something of the idea of service for others.

Of course most of our crowd are married now and are no longer active in the Girls' Club. But the very fact that we have a Bridge Club which meets regularly throughout the winter is an evidence that a very strong bond of friendship remains to remind us of our Girls' Club days.

Miss Mary G. Delaney, Member of the Girls' Club.

To go back over the years and relate all the many advantages derived from being a member of the Newton Girls' Club would be an impossibility, but I will endeavor to mention briefly some of the things that happened and that stand uppermost in my mind.

Some of the courses which I attended, given by the Club were in Millinery, Dressmaking, Tray-making and Psychology and I feel I was greatly benefited by these courses.

A very outstanding happy memory that remains with me is that of our trips to the Old Ladies' Home. On our departure from this institution each time I always felt that a great thing had been done - our bringing a little joy and sunshine into those sweet, kind and loving hearts who seemed to so enjoy the young folks and their entertainments.

Another feature was attendance at the many conventions in which I took an active part. Much of value, I felt, was derived from these. The one at Vassar College will never be forgotten.



## CHAPTER VI.

### THE TRAINING AND STANDARDS OF THE SOCIAL WORKER IN THIS FIELD

In the development of this chapter an attempt will be made to do two things. First, to give a list, with brief notes as to their training and background, of the head-workers or directors of the work in Nonantum, from the time of the Day Nursery up to the present time of the Stearns School Centre. As far as the writer knows this is the first time that the list of workers has ever been set down in this fashion. The list is complete as to terms of service but it is not entirely so as to certain first names and it is meagre as to the detail of training on the part of certain of the workers. The very general attempt to summarize their work and personality is a case of "fools rush in where angels fear to tread". The list follows and is presented with a hope that its deficiencies may not be too apparent to those whose closeness to the work would enable them to make a fairer and a kindlier appraisal.



The Workers and Directors of the Social Work  
at the Stearns School in Nonantum 1906 - 1931  
Periods of Service, Educational Training and Background.

1. Miss \_\_\_\_\_ Emerson, April 1906 to May 1907.

Miss Emerson was a graduate nurse. She desired a change from private practice and so came to the Day Nursery in the very first of its existence in the Bogan House. Miss Emerson was very nice with the children. She was an excellent caretaker and matron of the house but did not have the social service background and point of view.

2. Miss Luella Turner, Sept. 1, 1907 to June 1, 1910.

Miss Turner was a resident of Salem, Mass., where she had had valuable experience in social work conducted at the historical House of Seven Gables in that city. It has not been possible to learn the educational background of Miss Turner but she was known to be a woman of the studious type. To her fell the lot of making the pioneer contacts in the community at Nonantum during her three years of service. By some of the generous but untrained members of the Board of Directors she was thought to be too "hard boiled" in her dealing with certain families. However she was generally liked and welcomed into the homes she visited. It was with great regret that she left the work to return to Salem where she could be with an aged member of her own family.

3. Miss Guina Saville, June 13, 1910 to Jan. 24, 1911.

Miss Saville was a graduate of the Boston School for Social Workers. Her period of service was one of the shortest so that impressions of her are not very clear in the minds of those who were on the Board at that time. She was remembered as being very attractive personally.

4. Miss \_\_\_\_\_ Francis, to Feb. 25, 1913.

Miss Francis was a graduate of the New York School for Social Work. Like the term of her predecessor, that of Miss Francis seems to have left little in the way of outstanding memory. Possibly because Miss Francis had her training away from Boston, she may have found it more difficult to transfer her real interest and devotion to one of its suburbs.



5. Miss Cornelia Taylor, Sept. 8, 1913 to Sept. 18, 1917.

In the person of Miss Cornelia Taylor, the first worker to have her office in the Stearns School building, the local touch was very apparent. Through having resided in Newton and through many personal friendships and connections, Miss Taylor was able to make a real contribution.

A partial course at Smith College, a year of service as a teacher in one of the Southern schools and further service as a Y.W.C.A. Secretary at Albany, N.Y. had given her varied experience and training. It is said that she had a very human understanding of people and withal a certain dramatic quality about her. She was very much interested in her work in Nonantum.

6. Miss Dorothy Stockin, Sept. 18, 1917 to March 1, 1919.

Miss Stockin was a Watertown, Mass. girl who came to the Stearns School work after the completion of a three years' course in Household Arts at the Framingham Normal School. She came first as the assistant to the Matron to take charge of the Cooking Classes at the School in April 1916. When Miss Taylor left Miss Stockin's familiarity with the work made her the logical successor. She was thus one of the youngest workers to have the work in charge. Miss Stockin was very capable along the lines of her training and had the gift of friendship to an unusual degree.

After the dozen years since her leaving to undertake other work, as Mrs. C.A. Waterhouse of Waltham, Mass., she still meets several times each year with the loyal group of the earliest members of the Girls' Club, many of whom, though now married, still hold together for fortnightly meetings during the winter seasons.

7. Miss Annie L. Weeks, March 1, 1919 to July 1, 1920.

Miss Weeks, like Miss Taylor, had a local background for her connection with the Nonantum work. She was a graduate of the Boston School for Social Workers and had had experience in Rochester, N.Y. and Washington, D.C. She also had seen service during the World War period with the Public Safety Committee and the Welfare Bureau of Newton. She made her home with Mrs. George Bridges of Walnut St., Newtonville, Mass.

Of an organizing turn of mind, Miss Weeks sought to systematize and re-shape certain features of the work which effort seemed not to have made for fullest harmony at times with the members of the Board of Directors.

8. Miss Sara Schlechter, Sept. 1920 to March 1923.

Miss Schlechter, a native of Pennsylvania, was a



graduate of the New York School for Social Work, and came to Newton with a period of field work service in Brooklyn, N.Y. Possessed of charm and an energy hardly to be suspected in one so slight of body, Miss Schlechter brought a never-failing fund of enthusiasm with her. She was the first one to hold the title of Director of Community Activities and it was during her term of office that the first Ford car was put into service, thus enabling her to so multiply her efforts that an assistant was no longer felt necessary.

Miss Schlechter carried forward the work with great success. When she left it was regretted by all but she was not lost to the Stearns School Centre. As the present Mrs. Cecil Clark, the wife of one of Newtonville's most active physicians, she has continued her great interest in the work. She is now the Vice-President of the Stearns School Centre Board of Directors.

9. Miss Pauline Yetten, April 17, 1923 to July 1, 1925.

Miss Yetten had been a resident of the neighboring city of Waltham before coming to Newton. She was a graduate of the Boston School for Social Work and had had two years with one of the Neighborhood Houses of Boston. In addition she had had considerable opportunity to study social work of various kinds while on a trip across the country and to Hawaii.

The possessor of a pleasing personality, Miss Yetten sought to analyze the work to be done in Nonantum and sought to bring to bear all the aid the workers in the profession in other fields could contribute. She seemed to have a flair for presenting the work to its supporters and those she sought to gather into the classes and clubs in its most appealing form.

10. Miss Emily Reed, Sept. 1925 to June 1929.

Miss Reed was a graduate of Smith College who had been a teacher for a year at the Hindman School in Kentucky. Following that, she had had valuable training as Director of Boys' Clubs activities at Hull House in Chicago, Illinois. The summer previous to her coming to the Stearns School, she had spent at one of the Boston Settlement Houses.

It was during Miss Reed's incumbency that the one act dramatic competition was inaugurated and her interest in recreation was considerable, especially in the direction of hiking and winter sports. She left the Nonantum work to go back for recreation service in Kentucky.

11. Miss Helen I. Sandstrom, Sept. 1, 1929 to

Like Miss Schlechter, through whom she was persuaded to come, Miss Sandstrom is a native of Pennsylvania.



She is a graduate of a Church School in Philadelphia, where the course consists largely of handwork, crafts, theory and practice of visitation in the home.

While one is loth to attempt to characterize the work of one who is at present "on the job", it may be fairly stated that in her nearly two years in Nonantum, Miss Sandstrom has shown marked ability to do thorough and constructive work. Perhaps the one word "balanced" would serve most adequately to describe her labors. She has gained the friendship of the teachers at the Stearns School to an unusual degree and the same might be said for the Stearns School Centre Board and the members of the Clubs and Classes.

The balance of the chapter will be devoted to a brief development of the idea of the training and the standards of the present day social worker. There is a considerable literature upon this subject and much has been written in relation to it. The scope of this thesis will only permit the pointing out of some of the more obvious and pertinent comments upon a very interesting and rapidly developing subject. The phases which we present will touch upon the questions as to what social work is, whether it is to be considered as a profession, the growth and present extent of schools for the training of social workers, and finally the standards and specifications of those who would seek entrance into the work.

A definition of what is meant by social work is necessary even if it is not an easy thing to agree upon. The following are representative of the opinions of leaders within the field and of those who have sought to study it from the standpoint of educational training in preparation of it.



## Definitions of Social Work and Social Workers

First, we have the word of Professor Tufts of the Russell Sage Foundation.

The field of social work is notoriously broad and changing. It may well be doubted whether any definition which aims to single out the essence of social work will be satisfactory to all social workers. It is possible that by noticing several different ways of defining social work we may find help for the specific purpose in hand, which is to forecast, as clearly as we may, for what task or tasks we shall educate and train. Not even the institutions which give education and training, much less an observer from another profession - can prescribe authoritatively to social workers what they shall do. They will do what they - the people on the job - believe needs to be done, in-so-far as it seems to lie reasonably near them and within their powers. <sup>1</sup>

Dr. Devine is one of the seers and prophets of the Social Work field.

Social work, then, is the sum of all the efforts made by society to "take up its own slack" to provide for individuals when its established institutions fail them, to supplement those established institutions and to modify them at those points at which they have proved to be badly adapted to social needs. It may be well done or badly done; according to the most enlightened system which intelligence and sympathy and vision can devise or according to the archaic methods of careless and lazy emotion. It includes everything which is done by society for the benefit of those who are not in position to compete on fair terms with their fellows from whatever means and with whatever results. <sup>2</sup>

Another statement expresses the thought of Stuart Queen.

Perhaps the nearest we can come to a definition is to say that social work is the art of adjusting personal relationships, of helping to overcome the difficulties which may arise - for example, between native and foreign born, between employer and employee, between school and home. These are just the things that each of us tries to do for

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1. Tufts, Education and Training for Social Work, p.2

2. Devine, Social Work, p.2



himself and that we frequently try to do for our friends and neighbors. Most of us have not made a special study of such problems, of their causes or of the scientific basis for their solution. There would be much less confusion if the term social worker were reserved for people who have made such special studies and are trained in scientific methods of dealing with different problems of human relationships. <sup>3</sup>

The touch of authority is lent by the words from the American Association of Social Workers.

In discussing social work as a profession it is necessary to clarify certain conceptions that are popularly confused with it. As is the case with any activity that has emerged into professional status and differentiated itself from the kind of activity in which any one of ordinary intelligence might participate, social work must live down a variety of names and conceptions which were common to it in its early and unprofessional forms. So we come to the term "social work" for a connotation which at least has implicit implications of a process requiring specialized knowledge and skill sufficient to be called professional. It is well also to point out here that emphasis must be placed on "process" as an aid to keeping in mind the fact that not what is done, but how it is done, <sup>4</sup> is what constitutes the test of professional activity.

The question of whether social work may properly be called a profession has been much discussed both within and without the ranks of those engaged in the work. The following report of such discussions at two different dates will shed some light upon the point.

In an address before the National Conference of Social Work in 1915, Mr. Abraham Flexner discussed the question of social work's claim to being a profession and came to a decisive negative conclusion. He found it impossible to draw a clear line of demarcation about the field of social work as can be done for medicine, law, architecture, engineering. It was suggested that social work was "not so much

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<sup>3</sup> Queen, Social Work in the Light of History, p.18

<sup>4</sup> Pamphlet, Social Work, Amer. Ass'n of S.W., 1922.



a definite field, as an aspect of work in many fields", and that social work has grown up to supply the shortcomings of the professions, whose development may not yet be completed. Not only does Mr. Flexner find lack of specific aim and responsibility in social work, but he discovers another discrepancy in necessary standards for a profession: the possession of "a technique capable of communication through an orderly and highly specialized educational discipline" is naturally lacking, since social work has been unable to define its aims clearly.

Many social workers disagreed with Mr. Flexner's conclusion that social work had no definite field apart from the professions and with his belief that it was unlikely to develop into a full profession. Perhaps as many agreed that social work was not yet a profession but believed that it would become one; a few thought that it was not a profession and not likely to become one but felt that the question was relatively unimportant. Certainly, the majority of social workers regarded Mr. Flexner's statement as a challenge and have directed their energies during the past ten years toward the achievement of professional status.

At the National Conference of Social Work in 1925, the President of the American Association of Social Workers re-examined Mr. Flexner's appraisal of Social Workers in terms of certain stated tests of a profession. Representing an organization which owes its existence to a belief that social work is a profession, Mr. Hodson claimed that social work had definite aims and in case work had developed a technique capable of transmission through a specialized educational discipline. It was further claimed that in community and group work the social worker is doing a highly specialized job capable of definition and description. He concluded, however, that public opinion offers the final test of professional status and that social work has probably not yet attained such standing in the popular mind.<sup>5</sup>

Coming next to the growth and the present extent of the schools for the training of social workers, we again turn to Mr. Walker's admirable study of the matter.

Present education for social work continues to be far from satisfactory. The difficulties and complexities of the practical field result in confused demands for education-

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<sup>5</sup> Walker, Social Work and Training of Social Work, pp. 88, 89.



al preparation. A field of work where activities are not clearly defined or classified, are ever-changing, are related to activities in a dozen other fields, and are of intricate intellectual nature, presents almost insoluble problems to the educator. Two choices are open to those who undertake the task: the first is to prepare workers for a limited set of activities for which some kind of a job analysis can be made and in which opportunities for employment exist; the second is to educate, not for the vocational demands now manifest, but to develop social workers capable of molding social work, who may, in some remote future, succeed in making social work realize its full potentialities.

The majority of educators for social work have apparently decided to prepare workers for tasks which can be fairly well described and which are commonly held essential activities. What form of educational preparation is proposed to meet the needs of such activities? Two types of preparation are advocated: one type is training on the job - apprenticeship - and the other, educational discipline in an academic institution. Only within the past ten years has there been any strength of numbers in the group backing academic preparation. Though schools of social work had a beginning in the United States as early as 1898, the first full-time school of distinctly academic character was established in Boston in 1904 by Simmons College and Harvard University. By 1910, there were schools in the five largest cities in the country: New York, Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia, and St. Louis. Within the ten years, 1916-1926, twenty-five schools were established. There are now thirty-five schools in the United States and Canada having organized curricula in social work for full time students.<sup>6</sup>

In connection with this comment on the growth of the various schools for the training for social workers it might be said that the three most prominent schools and the ones which give their graduates the most prestige in the field are generally considered to be as follows.

1. The Simmons College School for Social Work, Boston, Mass.
2. The New York School for Social Work, New York, N.Y.

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<sup>6</sup> Walker, opus cit. p.131



3. The University of Chicago Graduate School of Social Service Administration, Chicago, Ill.

Miss Alice S. Cheyney also has attempted to analyze the training facilities of our country.

There are some twenty-four schools for the training of social workers, independent institutions or university departments. The younger among them have not followed at all closely the organization or practices of the older. They all work in close co-operation with local social agencies, farming their students out with these for practice work and drawing lecturers from the agency staffs. This should mean that they are in pretty close touch with the current demands of the profession. The varied curricula of the schools seem therefore to offer direct evidence of what is considered in their respective regions the most necessary equipment for social workers.

There are a great many courses offered and the variety not of nomenclature only but of apparent content is enough for bewilderment. Classification of the courses according to the type of preparation they seem to offer does, however, sort them into three main groups:

- A. Courses which introduce the student to the "social sciences", their methods and concepts.
- B. Courses which offer information on the field of social work both past and present.
- C. Courses which equip specifically for certain social work tasks.<sup>7</sup>

The school catalogues seem to indicate a practice of recognizing about eleven general fields of social work activity:

1. Organization of community groups on various scales in urban and rural areas.
2. Public health work.
3. Mental hygiene work.
4. Work in the interest of children.

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<sup>7</sup> Cheyney, The Nature and Scope of Social Work, pp. 41, 43.



5. Family welfare work and case work.
6. Work in connection with industry.
7. Work with delinquents.
8. Work centering in race or nationality adjustments.
9. Administrative work.
10. Provision of recreational opportunities.
11. Religious social work.

The time required to complete a course for a degree in the leading training schools varies from one to two full years. The field work always covers a considerable portion of the time required in residence at the school and is of course not to be slighted or hurried through by means of any short-cuts. The cost of tuition ranges from \$250 to \$500 per year. To this must be added living expenses and other necessary incidentals. We present two viewpoints on the value of this outlay of time and money on the part of the prospective social worker.

First we note what Mr. Walker has to add on this point:

Another serious result of low salaries in social work is that adequate educational preparation becomes impractical. The social agencies assert that a full college education and one or two years of specialized graduate work is the kind of preparation desirable for social work. In practice, they state that they are unable to hold up these standards because there are not applicants available with such background. It is not to be wondered at when the beginning salaries - from \$75 (or less) to \$125 a month, according to size of the agency and the city in which it is located - are known. The schools of social work have a struggle to present clinching arguments for a specialized education of one or two years, when the agencies evaluate such preparation by offering only an additional ten dollars a month



over the usual beginning salary. That the schools have rather small registrations and are unable to supply the full needs of the agencies does not seem curious.<sup>8</sup>

A more recent and optimistic note is sounded by Miss Ruth Hill:

If this year's graduates enter one of the twenty-eight professional schools of social work for another year or two of special training, they will stand a better chance of acceptance by one of the welfare societies. But there is an immediate opportunity for the most promising all around, fun loving and hardest working young men and women. They must realize that the present shortage is due chiefly to the exacting requirements of today. A few years ago welfare agencies were less discriminating. Social work no longer means relieving financial and material distress only. It involves every problem; educational, mental, legal, physical, that can confront and discompose a family. Good intentions and training are both necessary. And underlying both must be a disposition to understand and like the most difficult specimens of humanity.

While social work is still no profession in which to make a fortune salaries are better today than they have been, and as communities are coming to appreciate more fully the nature and value of modern social work, salaries in this profession should become comparable with those in the other major professions.<sup>9</sup>

There is almost a universal agreement among those who have any acquaintance with the field of social work as to the high standards to be met by those who would seek to enter the field of service. Again we have the testimony of Mr. Walker:

The social worker is in intimate relationship with certain individuals who, ordinarily, apply for assistance when facing an acute personal problem of economic, legal, medical, ethical, or psychological nature. Personal problems present an infinite variety of aspects, and the social worker is called upon to exercise his ingenuity

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<sup>8</sup>. Walker, opus cit. p. 126

<sup>9</sup>. Hill, Social Work as a Career, p. 159



and the full resources of the community in order to achieve adjustments. He must be able to assemble all the facts which are pertinent and must be able to hold the confidence of all with whom he deals through his evident knowledge of facts. In addition, he must inspire confidence by other than rational methods of treatment. The client must develop some emotional responsiveness to the adviser if there is to be any personality growth. The creation of such reactions involves activities of an intellectual and subtle order. <sup>10</sup>

Miss Mary E. Richmond intimates how the opportunity and the standards have changed.

For every one thing that could then (1832) be done about a man's attitude toward his life and his social relations, about his health, housing, work and recreation, there are now (1917) a dozen things to do. The power to analyze a human situation closely as distinguished from the old method of falling back upon a few general classifications grows with the consciousness of the power to get things done. <sup>11</sup>

From a source nearer at hand we have the opinion of Miss Chapin.

Miss Ruth Chapin of the Newton Welfare Bureau

The longer I am in social work the more firmly I am convinced that social workers are born and not made. My definition of social work is that it is "concentrated applied common sense". I am of the opinion that living experience can give much of the necessary background to the social worker and it must always supplement the theoretical knowledge that a worker may have.

From the pen of Mrs. G.W. Auryansen, whose services of forty years on the Board of Directors for the Newton Welfare Bureau have earned her the title of an "amateur expert" in social work, and who for many years has been a

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<sup>10</sup> Walker, opus cit. p. 106

<sup>11</sup> Richmond, Social Diagnosis, p. 29



member of the Board of the Stearns School Centre, having served as President and now holding the office of Clerk, there comes a comprehensive statement as to the qualities needed by a present day social worker.

With the beginning of the new century (Twentieth), social work had become a profession calling for scientific and technical training - a profession that appealed to most young women and a few men as something worthwhile. I sometimes wonder why when I see what it takes out of them. It certainly is a challenge!

Besides a background of general culture, a successful social worker needs a knowledge of all the resources in the way of helpful organizations, hospitals, clinics, homes for old and young, etc. She must have some knowledge of legal practice - and of course she has to know the laws of the state and city in regard to public relief. She must know something of medicine, for she will often be called upon to decide important questions of health - and nowadays she is expected to study Psychology - for much is being made of Psychiatric treatment of cases. She must know household economics, though now coming more and more to depend on specialists to help families in budgeting their meagre incomes. And then she should have splendid health, for hours are long and tasks exhausting, and, more than all - personality and charm, for she has to deal with all sorts and conditions of men and women and children, and it furthers her business greatly if Board members and policemen - aldermen and rotarians - not to mention her clients - eat out of her hand. If she is a hospital social worker - which subject seems a chapter all to itself - she needs much of the training of the doctor and nurse added to the rest. An impossible specification you say? I might think so if I hadn't worked with so many girls who come near to filling it.

It is a far cry from the St. Vincent de Paul's gray sisters of mercy with their white coifs to the well-set-up college girl in smart clothes of today, driving her Ford and ready to discuss understandingly and frankly any subject from intemperance to coal bills, from T.B. to illegitimate babies. Someone has summed up the qualifications of a social worker as needing "a hard head, a soft heart and a warm hand". One had only to look at the splendid body of men and women - mostly young - who came together 4000 strong at the National Conference last summer in Boston to realize that social service work calls for the best and gets it!



And for a final word which suggests something of the indomitable spirit of the social worker let me close with the words of the president of the 1920 Conference on Social Work.

The two qualities most needed are a belief in human improbableness and a willingness to tackle the job. So long as there are human frailties there will be need of social workers. But let us not forget that the larger vision of social work contemplates not charity alone but justice, and all social ills arising from environment are man-made and therefore changeable.

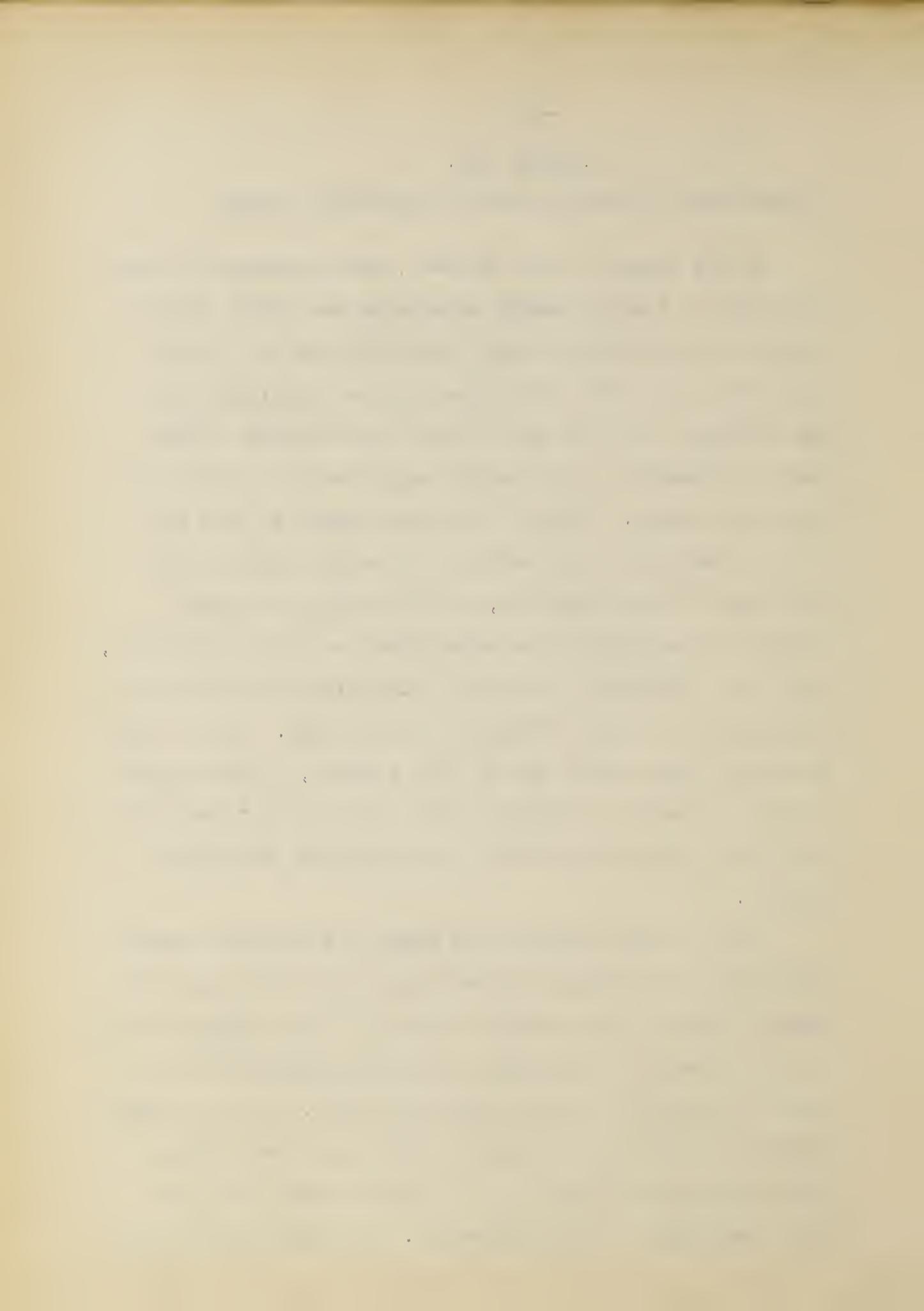


## CHAPTER VII.

### THE OUTLOOK AND THE FUTURE OF THE SCHOOL CENTRE

At the outset of this chapter, which attempts to give something of the philosophy underlying the school centre movement and to consider what its future may be, it is only fair to say that the writer has not considered it his function to in any way discuss the essential wrongness or rightness of the social organization in which we are living today. While it has been suggested that one of the functions of the new type of social worker is to help mold the life about us, yet the task of settling the discussion which is so wide-spread as to the financial, political, industrial and social conditions of present day civilization is quite foreign to this thesis. In the pages which have gone before and in this chapter, I shall simply trace the strands of thought which have led us to our present ideas about social work as carried on by the school centres.

Also it seems necessary to point out that the Stearns School Centre is unique in that it is one of the very few school centres of the country which is being carried on by a private board of directors, entirely separate from any school department or other municipal board. It has worked in a fine spirit of co-operation with the Newton School Department and the Staff of the Stearns School but has been independent in its management. This distinctive fea-



ture is one that makes much of what has been written about school centres in general apply to the local school centre in a slightly different way from that of the great majority of the school centres throughout the United States.

Most of the opinions which follow are from other than local students of the subject. Individually and collectively they set forth much that is indicative of the trends of thought of those who have studied the movement. In the presentation of these expressions on the part of these individuals we shall group their testimonies along these general headings: the beginnings and extent of the school centre movement, the advantages and disadvantages in the use of public school buildings, the need of new methods of approach, its relationship with the idea of a better citizenship and what may be expected for the future of the movement.

One of the recent writers who comments upon the extent and scope of the School Centre plan is Seba Eldridge in his book, "The New Citizenship - A Study of American Politics". It will be noted that he makes reference to Edward J. Ward, of Rochester, N.Y., frequently mentioned as the "father of the school centre movement".

These centres are designated by a variety of terms, of which civic centre, social centre, community centre and neighborhood centre are the common ones. A movement for the establishment of such centres began in 1907 with the initiation of the Rochester experiment in school community centres under the leadership of Edward J. Ward. The movement has steadily grown since that time and community centres may be found in all parts of the country and



in all sorts of communities. I have been unable to find any estimate of their number, but it certainly runs into the thousands.<sup>1</sup>

The activities of community centres are broad in scope, and tend to become more so. Public forums, civic clubs, local improvement societies, parent-teacher associations, branch libraries, evening classes, study groups, concerts, choruses, recitals, plays, pageants, celebrations, movies, dances, clinics and many other activities are included in the list, though these are all rarely found in one centre. Generally speaking, centres tend to become genuine focal points in the civic, recreational and cultural activities of their neighborhoods. Some have seen in them the promise of a basic social unit linking up the family and the neighborhood with the city or county, the state, the nation and organized society in general. Edward J. Ward conceives the centre as, in potentia, the inclusive organization of all the citizens of the neighborhood, which when appropriately integrated into larger units, can serve in a truly representative fashion all the functions now devolving on political parties, thus render the latter unnecessary, and eventually bring government under popular control.<sup>2</sup>

From the hand of the same writer we have his summary of the advantages and the disadvantages in the use of the public school buildings.

Centres are conducted under all sorts of auspices, including public schools, churches, women's clubs, granges and community councils, or associations established for this particular purpose. A large percentage of them are located in public school buildings, but many of these are not directed or controlled by the educational authorities, though the consent of the latter is necessary to such use of school properties. School buildings are thus utilized because it is believed to be a highly appropriate use of public property that would otherwise be idle at the hours when community centres are in session. Moreover, they are conveniently located, being in the centers of residential districts; and the school system furnishes a handy, if not altogether suitable, district organization for civic undertakings growing out of community centre activities. Moreover, use of school buildings obviates the expense - an important consideration - of constructing special buildings for the centres, which would often be necessary otherwise.

Disadvantages of the school buildings include lack of architectural adaptation to centre uses (which, however,

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<sup>1</sup>•Eldridge, The New Citizenship, p. 197

<sup>2</sup>•Eldridge, opus cit. p. 199



can be gradually overcome as old buildings are displaced by new ones); traditional prejudices against the use of school buildings for any except school purposes; and the not infrequent opposition of special interests to certain community centre activities in public buildings of any sort. The use of school properties for centre purposes, however, has been extended, despite these difficulties.<sup>3</sup>

Cincinnati, Ohio, is one of the larger cities where the School Centre development has been notably successful under the direction of Will R. Reeves, Executive Secretary of the Cincinnati Community Service. In a bulletin entitled, "An Experiment in Democracy", he advocates the use of the school building.

Our modern complex civilization, with its disintegrating influence on family and community life, its regimentation of classes, its numerous religious sects, is not the most fertile soil in which the seed of community consciousness may be planted and come to fruition. And yet, in our great American Democracy, extending over three and one-half billion square miles and including more than 120,000,000 people - rich and poor, black and white, Catholics, Protestants, Jews and non-believers, - of varying ideals and standards, - some unit must be used as an instrument to bring about a better understanding between the clashing constituent elements if we are to give more than lip service to the democratic ideal. The ultimate unit of democracy in every state, county or community is the school district. The public schoolhouse, owned by all the people - sacred to all as the home of the child, - is the only building where all citizens have equal rights; the only building that can be made the community home, club, or capitol.<sup>4</sup>

A writer who sees some of the limitations to be found in the use of the public schools is Edward C. Lindeman, in his study entitled, "The Community".

Utilizing the public school equipment and machinery for executing community programs is but a phase of the process of community organization. After the concession to use the school equipment and machinery is secured, there remains the task of securing the best services of the specialists and the specialized agencies, and the more difficult task of constructing a democratic piece of social machinery, through which the community may express its will.

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<sup>3</sup>• Eldridge, opus cit. p. 198

<sup>4</sup>• Reeves, An Experiment in Democracy, p. 1



This process is much the same whether the school, the church, the community-house, or other existing institutions are utilized. It is frequently claimed that the community organization, radiating from the public school, is more likely to have all the elements of Democracy than would be true in the case of other organizations. This is yet to be demonstrated. During the World War, and after, many school centres suffered a sharp decline in interest and attendance; this was, in part, due to the abridgement of freedom of speech in the open forum meetings. In short, the public school is an institution controlled by governmental officials; these officials owe their allegiance to political parties. In crises, the public school becomes, not a free community organization, but the organ of one section of the population. Instead of waiting for Democracy to seep down from the governmental agencies to the local communities, it may be wiser to build Democracy upward from the smaller unit; when these smaller units are truly Democratic, the governmental units will be so, *ipso facto*.<sup>5</sup>

One of the nation's leading educators, George D. Strayer, in an article on "The Place of the Public Schools in Providing Leadership in Play and Recreation" indicates some of the features which the newer type of school should have which would make them even more useful for school centres.

The modern school should be a place where boys and girls should live, grow, work and play. It should have these features. A little theatre - not a part of the gymnasium, not a playfield but many playfields, (the minimum space for an elementary school is five acres) a real library with room for many books, real laboratories, a dark room, shops, movies rooms, music and band rooms.<sup>6</sup>

Our national capitol, the city of Washington, D.C. is another one of the great cities where the school centre has flourished. Miss Sibyl Baker of their Community Centre Department says:

Certain problems face us in the development of the community centres. Specifically we are asking this question. Can school buildings be made to serve as real cen-

<sup>5</sup>•Lindeman, The Community, pp. 160, 161.

<sup>6</sup>• Strayer, The Place of the P.S. in Providing Leadership in Play and Recreation.



tres of community life? Our latest buildings, new handsome structures, well lighted and equipped with ample facilities, are more and more in demand by the communities.<sup>7</sup>

Another city which is worthy of mention among the leaders in the promotion of the school centre is Milwaukee, Wisconsin. More than a dozen of their buildings are in use during the winter season for this purpose. The folders which they put out carry the caption, "The Lighted School House - The Great American Opportunity".

Among a number of the thinkers and writers in this field there is to be noted a tempering of their enthusiasm with the recognition of the need for the development of new approaches to the work of the school centres. Clarence Arthur Perry, these many years connected with the Russell Sage Foundation, writes in his recent article, "The Tangible Aspects of Community Organization", this word of caution and advice to those engaged in the work.

One of the reasons why we as a body of workers have not been able to view our field objectively is because we have all been keenly interested in promoting certain specific ends. We have wanted the boys to have better places in which to play; a chance for girls to dance among friends; opportunity for the foreigner to learn English, and American customs; or such ample discussions among voters that the boss would not be able to control them. Our closeness to, and preoccupation with, these specific objectives have, however, prevented us from attaining them in the most effective ways. Take, for example, the methods we have sometimes employed in school centres, especially those in the poorer districts of large cities. There we have often attempted to put together clubs, societies and associations, in a couple of evenings, in the same way - just as mechanically - as a

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<sup>7</sup> Baker, The Adaptation of the Social Centre in Washington, D.C. to Changing Urban Needs, p. 231



carpenter would nail together a packing case. Such groupings, being artificial, have generally existed only so long as the paid leadership was in charge. Had we first studied specimens of these organizations while they were growing in their natural soil, in the way that the botanist examines flora, we should have realized that the successful community organizer can never work like a mechanic. We should have known that each type of association, whether it be a chess club, a literary society, or a little-theatre group, has a set of habits, an individuality, and a specific habitat, all its own, and can be made to live only under conditions which meet its peculiar requirements.<sup>8</sup>

A positive note is the further contribution of Seba Eldridge in the reference previously mentioned.

Despite its limitations, the community centre, like the community councils and associations, is fostering habits of co-operation and types of interest that will prove invaluable contributions to the development of a competent citizenship when well-conceived, resolute attempts in this direction are made. More significantly expressed, the community centre movement is contributing to the development of a primary-group phase of the community and the state, which have languished hitherto because, for one thing, they are so largely constituted of secondary-group relationships. With a primary-group phase developed, they can successfully appeal to the individual for a substantial share of their proper interest and devotion, along with the family, the vocation, the economic class and the church, all of which are primary groups or embrace such groups in their organization.<sup>9</sup>

Our neighboring city of Boston has been a pioneer in the planning and the maintenance of a number of school centres. Mrs. Eva Whiting White, Head of the Elizabeth Peabody Settlement House, and an authority of national repute on many phases of social work, was for a number of years in charge of the work for the Boston School Department. In her address, "The Contribution of the School to

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<sup>8</sup>•Perry, The Tangible Aspects of Community Organization, p. 561.

<sup>9</sup>•Eldridge, opus cit. p. 202.



*Social Work with Adults*", she indicates that the movement is only one of many which are making a contribution in this direction.

With these statements in mind, it may be well to apply a critique, because the community centre is still young. It is developing; it is not developed. The community centre cannot assume to be the only social agency. Although it is destined to be a tremendous force in progress, nevertheless it will not be the one avenue to the next advance. Life does not go that way.

The community center will not bring about the millennium day after tomorrow, of course, but just as our government centralizes our action, so this function of our city and town administration is destined to be the major co-ordinating force in community interplay. Therefore, as citizens, we must understand its power and make every effort to win for it statesmanlike and human leadership of the highest order, and give to it our full loyalty.<sup>10</sup>

As was so well illustrated in a number of instances in connection with the Stearns School Centre, it is part of the function of the Social Centre of this type to initiate activities only to have them taken over later by some of the other agencies of the community which are better equipped for that particular activity. A word on the function of the school centre is sounded by Lindeman in his chapter on "Institutionalism and the Division of Labor".

A consideration of the law of the division of labor indicates that modern institutions grow by the loss of function, and not by the increase of function. In other words, they increase the intensity of their programs when in healthy growth; conversely, they extend their programs when they become pathological and out of harmony with modern social progress.

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<sup>10</sup>. White, *The Contribution of the School to Social Work with Adults*, p. 444.



The Church has been selected as an illustration of the law of the division of labor. The same principle applies to all other institutions. The school centre movement may appear to be an exception to the rule. Upon closer study it will be revealed that this is not the case. The successful school centres are not re-establishing lost functions; they are rather assuming new or neglected functions. The most successful school centres are those in which the highest and best use is made of the specialized agencies of the community.<sup>11</sup>

There is a very definite linking up of the work that social workers are doing in the school centres with the efforts to improve the citizenship of our nation. The part which the social workers play is indicated by Seba Eldridge in his chapter on "The Political Significance of Social Work".

We can start by saying that social workers are themselves citizens in a special sense. They may be considered professional citizens, as may also, though in a different sense, professional politicians and public officials. Social workers have indeed multiplied and flourished partly because politicians and officials proved themselves not altogether satisfactory as professional citizens. They have provided a sort of representation for elements of the public and for public interests that political parties and governmental agencies could not or would not adequately represent. In doing that they have modified the policies and practices of these political representatives of the public. In effect they are building up a great institution of public service which may eventually be as influential in public affairs as the political party itself. It seems indeed quite possible that a hundred years hence the rise and growth of social work in the United States will be adjudged as significant a development in our institutions of social control as was the development of political parties during the last century.<sup>12</sup>

Another writer, M. P. Follett, in her "The New State" makes this same point with even greater emphasis.

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<sup>11.</sup> Lindeman, opus cit. pp. 110, 111.

<sup>12.</sup> Eldridge, opus cit. p. 162.



If the School Centres are to fill an important place in neighborhood life, they must not only give an opportunity for the development of neighborhood consciousness and neighborhood organization, but they must train up young people to be ready for neighborhood organization. We, who believe in the School Centre as one of the most effective means we have for reconstructing city life, believe that the School Centre can furnish this training. We hear everywhere of the corruption of American municipal politics, but why should the next generation do any better than the present unless we are training our young men and women to a proper understanding of the meaning of good citizenship and the sense of their own responsibility? We must deliberately train for citizenship as for music, art or trade. The School Centres are, in fact, both the prophecy of the new democracy and a method of its fulfillment. They provide an opportunity for its expression, and at the same time give men and women the opportunity for the training needed to bring it to its highest expression. <sup>13</sup>

And again this same writer in his chapter on "The Training for the New Democracy" takes us straight to the heart of what the social centres may mean and should mean to the future.

First, we have in the Centres those activities which require working together, such as dramatic and choral clubs, orchestras and bands, civic and debating clubs, folk-dancing and team games. We want choral unions and orchestras, to be sure, because they enrich the community life at the same time that they emphasize the neighborhood bond, we want civic and debating clubs because we all need enlightenment on the subjects taken up in these clubs, but the primary reason for choosing such activities is that they are group activities where each can learn to identify himself with a social whole. This is the first lesson for all practical life.

Then the consciousness of the solidarity of the group leads directly to a sense of responsibility, responsibility in a group and for a group. Sooner or later every one in a democracy must ask himself, what am I worth to society? Our effort in the Centres is to help the birth of that moment. This is the social lesson: for people to understand that their every act, their work, their home-life,

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13. Follett, The New State, p. 366



the kind of recreation they demand, the kind of newspapers they read, the bearing of their children, the bringing up of their children - that all these so-called private acts create the city in which they live. It is not just when we vote, or meet together in political groups, or when we take part in some charitable or philanthropic or social scheme, that we are performing our duty to society. Every single act of our life should be looked at as a social act. <sup>14</sup>

One of the most suggestive summaries of the part which the leaders of the future must take is made by Lindeman in his study "The Community" to which reference has been previously made.

The Community Leader must generate ideas. When he becomes absorbed in the mechanism of activities he loses the capacity to create; his ideas grow stale. The only known method of remaining in the creative class is to be free. The community leader who belongs to a clique in the community, or who is the mouthpiece for persons or forces unseen, can never be a creative leader. Creative ideas come out of the future and not out of the past. The community leader in a Democracy must share the future. His golden age must be translated in terms of the community in which he labors. <sup>15</sup>

A very definite and sure place for the school centre movement is confidently predicted by Mrs. White in these paragraphs from the address delivered before the 1923 Conference of Social Work at Washington, D.C.

With the opportunity which the community centre offers for the development of the creative, we should in time get definite contributions to our material for plays, for our music, and for our art expression. Surely the community centre movement is fundamental, and in accepting the responsibility for assisting in its development, school boards are adding much to the effectiveness of their day-school education, and also building upon their efforts in night-school instruction, because as the adults of a commu-

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<sup>14</sup>• Follett, opus cit. p. 368.

<sup>15</sup>• Lindeman, opus cit. pp. 192, 193.



nity are, so to a great extent are the children. Attitudes of mind will certainly be granted as greater than facts, and adults set very largely those attitudes of mind. Moreover, adult education, as adult education, gets its test and its final development according to the part it plays in community civic and social enterprise.

In the life of today, then, what place is the community centre destined to fill? As an avenue for a constant current of information, as a means for developing that individualization of thought and deepening of knowledge which is so much needed, the community centre stands as one of its great agencies. It can out-university the university in its power to meet every mind or every level of attainment; as a means of enlarging the social experience of our peoples, by means of the social community programs that are carried out, it stands without a peer; as an instrument through which persons can swing into action to meet local needs and civic and social necessities, it is essential to the operation of our democratic motives; as a great cultural agency its possibilities are only just dawning on our comprehensions; finally, as a means for building up a background in the individual life, it holds a unique position. Neighbors become neighbors under its influence. <sup>16.</sup>

Dr. A. Warren Stearns, Commissioner of Corrections for the State of Massachusetts, a leader in the general field of social service, in an address made during the past winter has this word to add.

Contacts between the home and the school must be made for the groups of neglected children to be found in some of our less privileged communities. It always costs more to do a job well than to do it poorly. The social service program will involve greater rather than less expense, but health of the whole social program cannot otherwise be maintained.

In this same vein is the contribution of Miss Annis M. Sturgis, the able Psychologist for the Newton School Department.

Negative Value: Danger of teachers feeling that they do not need to go into the homes, that the Social Worker can

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<sup>16.</sup> White, opus cit. p. 444.



make all the contact. Really both are needed because the teacher needs to feel the situation as well as hear about it.

Positive Value: The home is helped to get the school point of view. The school, on the other hand, has much better understanding of the home situation and the different influences which affect the child's relation to the school. There has been a steady upward trend in the attitudes of parents in their respect for and understanding of what is best for their children. It has broadened their homes by giving them more contacts and more interests. People are child-like in their emotions, in their faith or suspicion and have grown to know that these workers are always trying to do what will be for the best good of the whole family.

Teachers can make their own contacts, but they cannot make all that the Social Worker can, because of lack of time and training, and they have their own specialized job. Certain homes need to feel the dominating power of the group of people within their own community who respect a certain mores to which they must conform. They cannot neglect or exploit their children. In short, they truly feel the answer, "Yes" to, "Am I my brother's keeper?".

Gives them varied and constructive outlines for their leisure time. This teaches them group living, and stabilizing of emotional attitudes, and to have many satisfactions which they cannot get in their intellectual or economic life. These make the child a member of a larger society than in his home or classroom. There grows up in the child the feeling and realization that people understand him and are working for his best interests. Children are better understood, better clothed, better fed, therefore more comfortable and can learn with greater ease because of these Workers. The work is also valuable in helping in adjustments, in placing children. Ill: Deaf; dental clinics and hospitals; special classes. It is very valuable to have someone with tact, insight, and special training make the contacts between the home and these various places of help for children. Added to this side is the physical side of transportation and making possible the means of getting children to the places. Better mutual interest and closer relationships with tolerance, have surely been outcomes of the Social Centre Work. The standard of home and community life is raised by the school and the Social Centre working together.



My own personal point of view may be expressed briefly thus. I believe strongly in the development of leadership. At the same time, I do not believe that all are capable of becoming leaders and that fellowship has to be learned and developed just as leadership does. Just as in schools and colleges the intra-mural idea of sports and recreation is finding such success, so it can be applied to a community like Nonantum. In this age, when such an avalanche of impression comes to young people through the means of the radio, the movies and countless newspapers and magazines, there is need of the antidote of expression such as might come through Clubs and Recreation Groups of a school centre, especially in the line of dramatic expression and music. In somewhat the same sense that we may be in danger of losing the habit of walking because of the excessive use of the automobile, so we are getting to be a nation of "sitters on the side lines" when it comes to the matter of expressing ourselves along the lines just suggested. I believe that unwholesome and illegitimate forms of expression must be supplanted by wholesome and legitimate channels for young people to expend the natural energies of youth and early maturity. Substitution of this sort is what the Stearns School has done in the past, is doing at the present time, and should continue to do in even a greater degree in the future.

In concluding this chapter on the possibilities for



the future of the school centre idea, I want to suggest the philosophy of one other worker. I refer to Mrs. George H. Wilkins, of Boston, who, as one of the founders of the Nonantum Day Nursery and also the Clerk of the Stearns School Centre, had such a leading part in guiding the work which grew into the present day Stearns School Centre. From her vantage point of these latter days of 1931, she is able to see the past and to speak out with conviction as to the vision of the future. Her vigorous message is typical of the energy and positive force which was thrown into her pioneer work in Nonantum.

In suburban localities where there are mixed nationalities, involving wide diversity of social customs; where religious differences only serve to accentuate racial and social antagonisms, two major facts present themselves to those who are earnestly striving to bring about community solidarity.

1. The helpful avenue of approach through the children not yet molded into fixed types.
2. A Centre, free from any suggestion of religious, racial or social domination, must be provided, as a rallying point for unifying activities.

Obviously the School, the property of the community, free from any taint of dogma, exclusiveness or condemnation, fulfills the need. Through the activities and expanding interests of the children, the attention, otherwise, friendly and not too insistent guidance, of the older members of the family is gained and they are gradually drawn in.

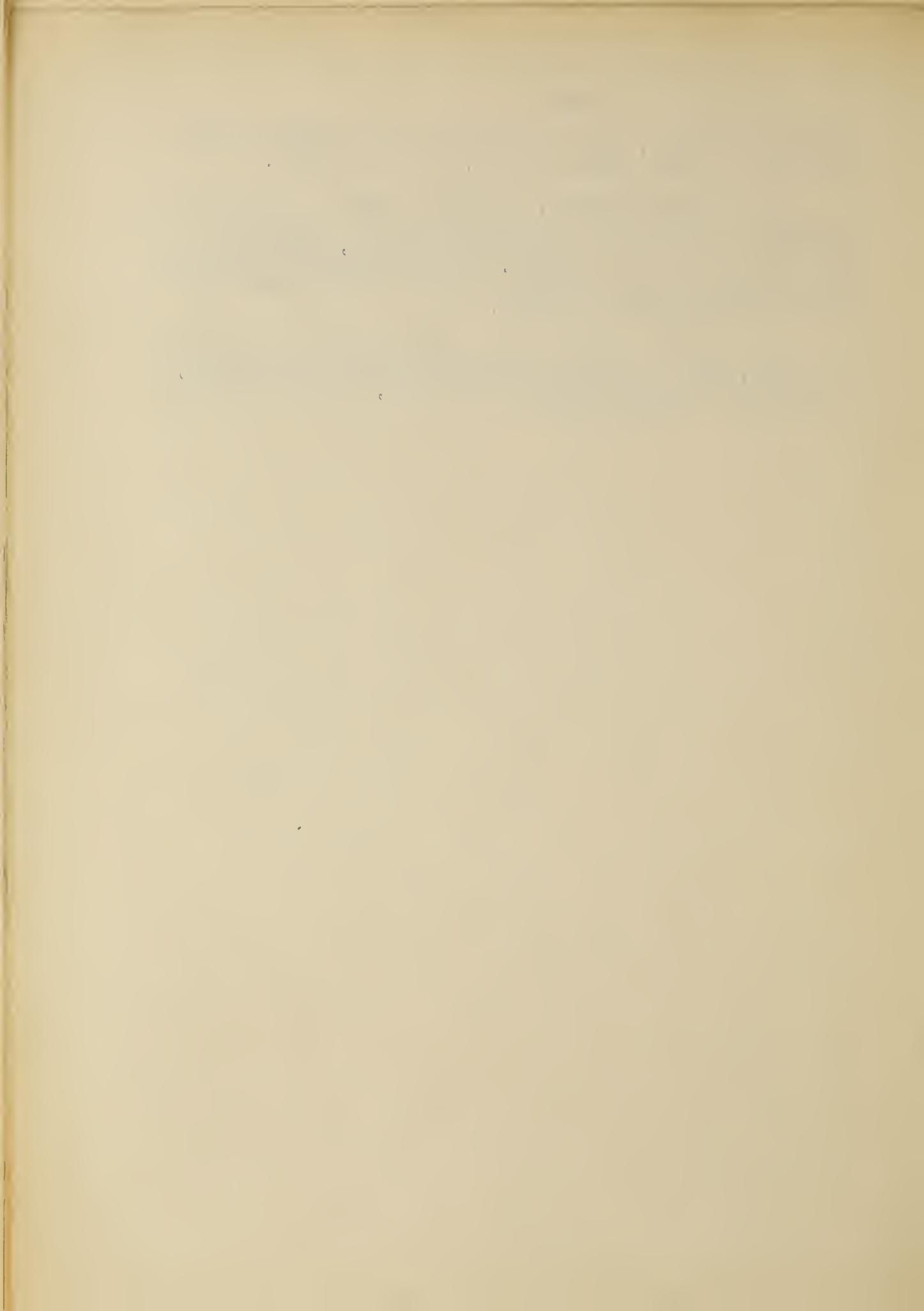
Opportunities for self-expression are here presented, making for development of the individual, and civic pride and understanding are also furthered. To such work will normally be attracted, not only the social worker and teachers, trained to guide so skillfully that the underlying support is hardly suspected, but also the socially-



minded volunteer, whose friendliness and comprehension may prove a most effective aid, in such a work.

The greatest danger, in such a work, is that which constantly besets the social worker - the apparent necessity of procuring immediate returns, thus imperiling the worth of the effort. Such a danger is far less serious in any work closely allied to the school than when conducted independently.

May not the future of the School Centre be greatly enlarged, and enhanced by the application of its plan, modified to meet differing conditions, to rural as well as suburban localities?



## CHAPTER VIII

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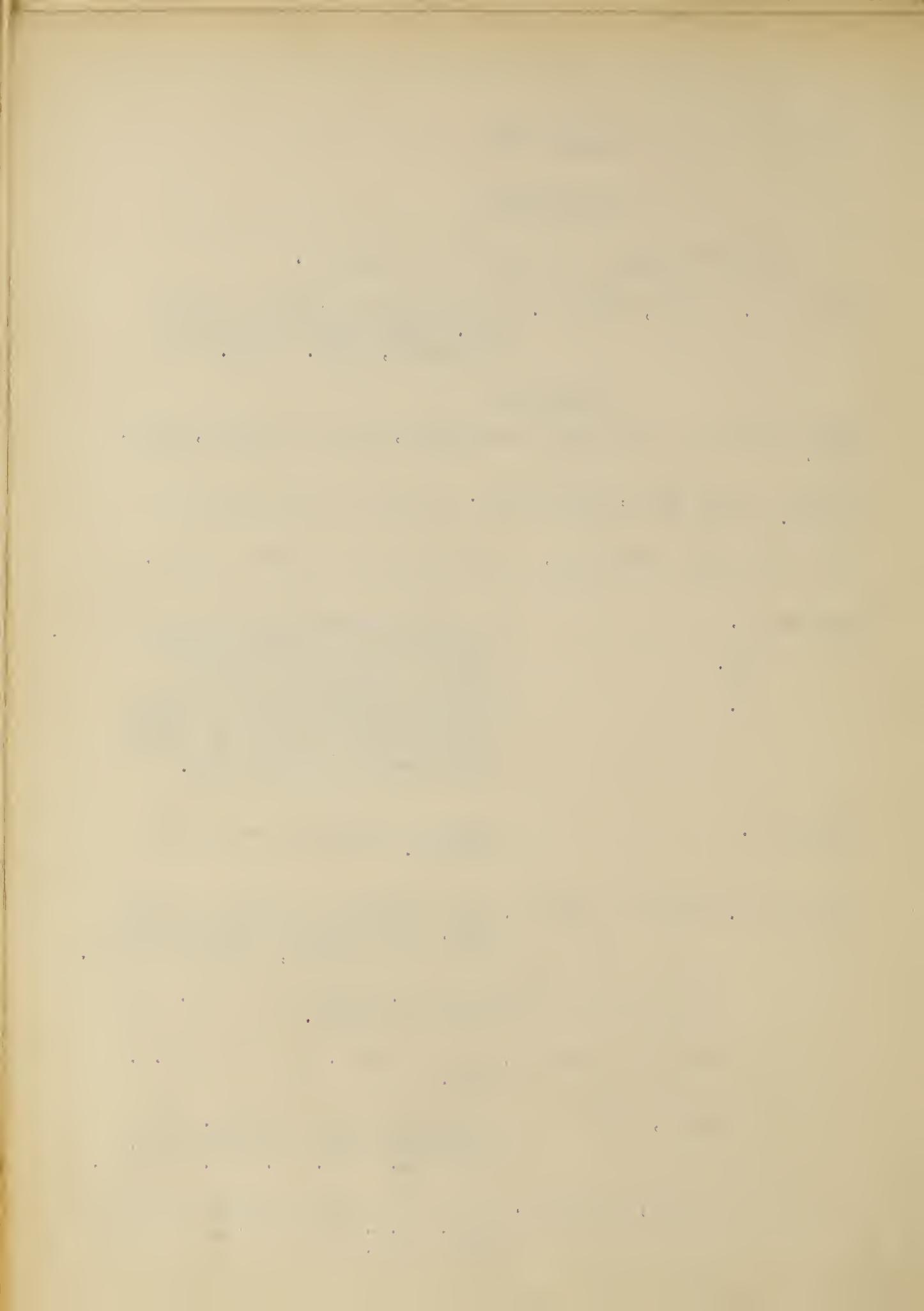
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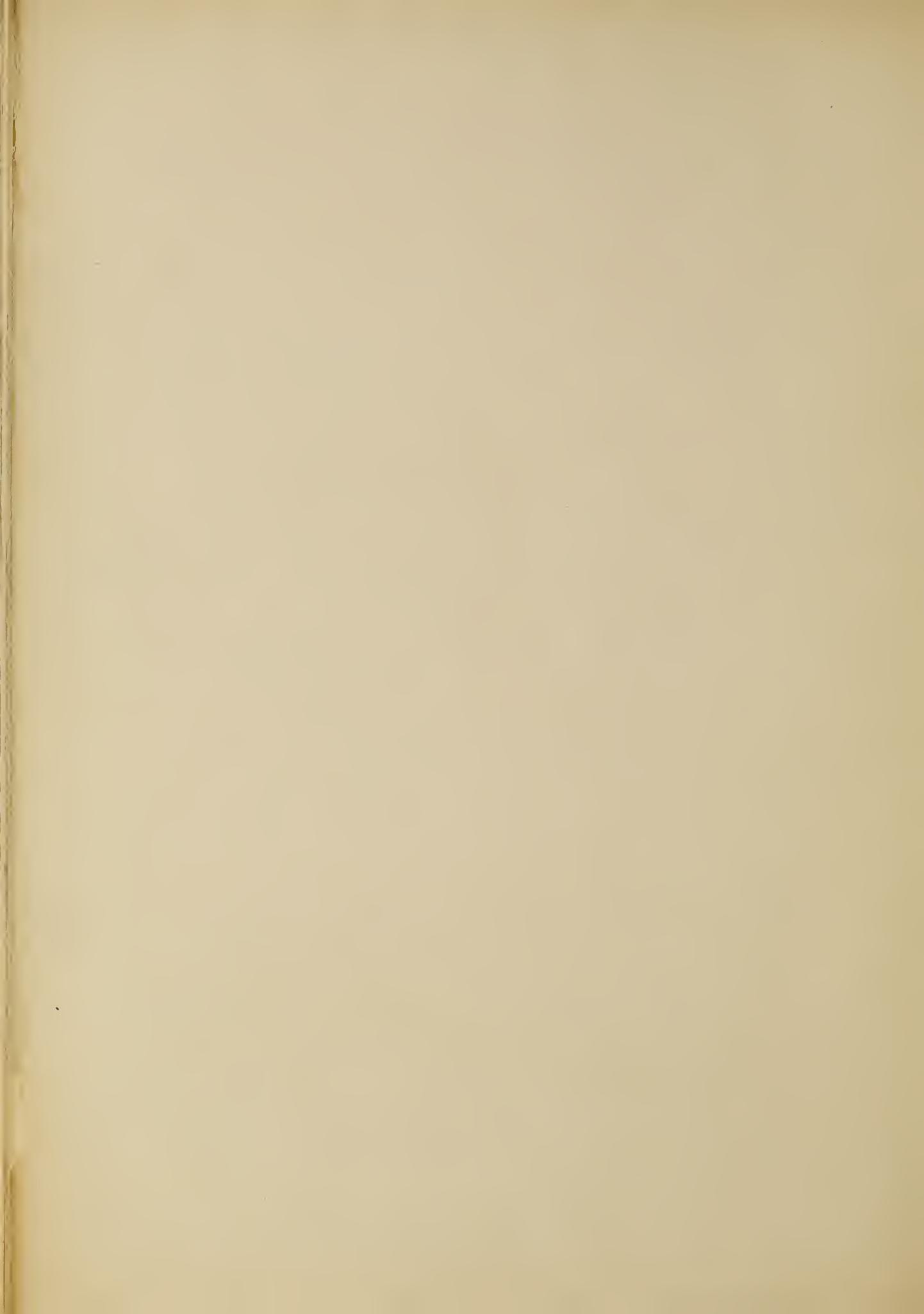
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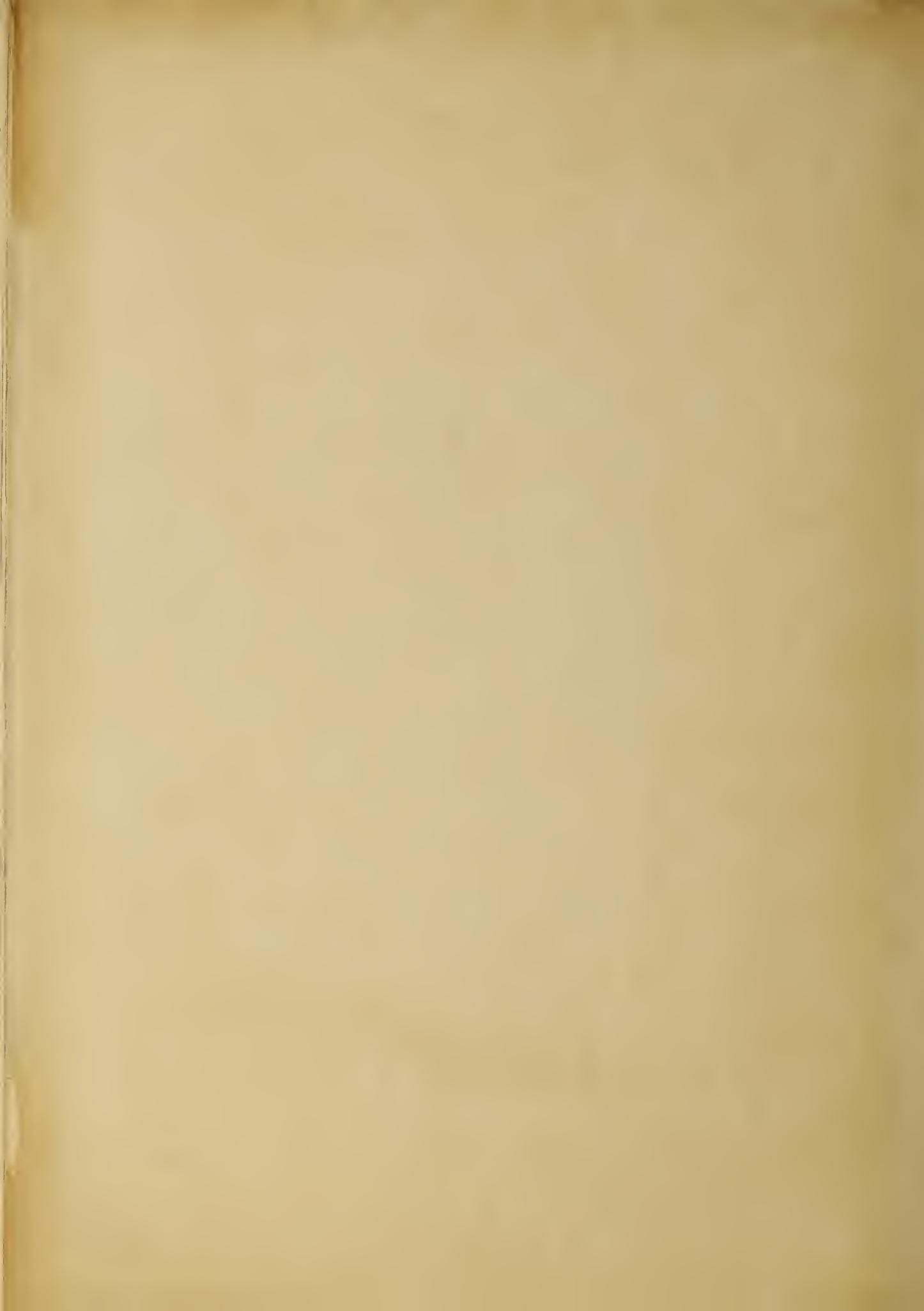
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